MEDITATIONS

AND

DISCOURSES

ON THE

GLORY of CHRIST.

IN TWO PARTS:

I. In his PERSON, OFFICE, and GRACE: with the Differences between FAITH and SIGHT. Applied unto the Uſe of them that believe.

II. The APPLICATION of the ſame MEDITATIONS unto unconverted SINNERS, and SAINTS under ſpiritual Decays.

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PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THE deſign of the enſuing diſcourſe, is to declare ſome part of *that glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which is revealed in the ſcripture, and propoſed as the principal object of our faith, love, delight, and admiration. But alas! after our utmoſt and moſt diligent inquiries, we muſt ſay, *How little a portion is it of him that we can underſtand!* His glory is incomprehenſible, and his praiſes are unutterable. Some things an illuminated mind may conceive of it; but what we can expreſs in compariſon of what it is in itſelf, is *even leſs than nothing*. But as for thoſe who have forſaken the only true guide herein, endeavouring to be *wiſe above what is written*, and to raiſe their contemplations by fancy and imagination above ſcripture-revelation, (as many have done), they have *darkened counſel without knowledge, uttering things which they underſtand not*, which have no ſubſtance or ſpiritual food of faith in them.

Howbeit, that real view which we may have of *Chriſt and his glory* in this world by faith, however weak and obſcure, that knowledge which we may attain of them by divine revelation, is inexpreſſibly to be preferred above all other wiſdom, underſtanding, or knowledge whatever. So it is declared by him, who will be acknowledged a competent judge in theſe things: *Yea doubtleſs*, (ſaith he) *I account all theſe things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.* He who doth not ſo, hath no part in him.

The revelation made of Chriſt in the *bleſſed goſpel*, is far more excellent, more glorious, and more filled with rays of divine wiſdom and goodneſs, than the whole creation; and the juſt comprehenſion of it, if attainable, can contain or afford. Without the knowledge hereof, the mind of man, however priding itſelf in other inventions and diſcoveries, is wrapped up in darkneſs and confuſion. This therefore deſerves the ſevereſt of our thoughts, the beſt of our meditations, and our utmoſt diligence in them. For if our future bleſſedneſs ſhall conſiſt in *being where he is, and beholding of his glory;* what better preparation can there be for it, than in a conſtant previous

contemplation of that glory in the revelation that is made in the goſpel, unto this very end, that by a view of it, we may be gradually transformed into the ſame glory.

I ſhall not therefore uſe any *apology* for the publiſhing of the enſuing meditations, intended firſt for the exerciſe of my own mind, and then for the *edification of a private congregation*, which is like to be the laſt ſervice I ſhall do them in that kind. Some may by the conſideration of them be called to attend unto the ſame duty with more diligence than formerly, and receive directions for the diſcharge of it; and ſome may be provoked to communicate their greater light and knowledge unto the good of many. And that which I deſign farther in the preſent diſcourſe, is to give a brief account of the *neceſſity* and *uſe*, in life and death, of the duty exhorted unto.

Particular *motives* unto the diligent diſcharge of this duty, will be preſſed in the diſcourſe itſelf. Here ſome things more general only ſhall be premiſed. For all perſons not immerſed in ſenſual pleaſures, not overdrencht in the love of this world, and preſent things, who have any generous or noble thoughts about their own nature, being and end, are under the higheſt obligation to betake themſelves unto this *contemplation of Chriſt and his glory*. Without this they ſhall never attain true reſt or ſatisfaction in their own minds. He it is alone in whom the race of mankind may boaſt and glory, on whom all its felicities do depend. For,

1. He it is in whom our *nature*, which was debaſed as low as hell by *apoſtacy* from God, is exalted above the whole creation. Our nature in the original conſtitution of it, in the perſons of our firſt parents, was *crowned with honour and dignity*. The *image of God* wherein it was made, and the dominion over the lower world wherewith it was intruſted, made it the ſeat of excellency, of beauty and of glory. But of them all it was at once diveſted and made naked by ſin, and laid groveling in the duſt from whence it was taken. *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return*, was its righteous doom. And all its internal faculties were invaded by deformed luſts; every thing that might render the whole *unlike* unto God, whoſe *image* it had loſt. Hence it became the contempt of angels, the dominion of ſatan, who being the enemy of the whole creation, never had any thing or place to *reign* in, but the debaſed nature of man. Nothing was now more vile and baſe, its glory was utterly departed. It had both loſt its peculiar *nearneſs* unto God, which was its honour, and was fallen into the greateſt *diſtance* from him of all creatures, the devils only excepted, which was

its ignominy and ſhame. And in this ſtate, as unto any thing in itſelf, it was left to periſh eternally.

In this condition, loſt, poor, baſe, yea curſed, the Lord Chriſt the Son of God found our nature. And herein in infinite condeſcenſion and compaſſion, ſanctifying a portion of it unto himſelf, he took it to be his own, in an holy ineffable ſubſiſtence in his own perſon. And herein again, the ſame nature, ſo depreſſed into the utmoſt miſery, is exalted above the whole creation of God. For in that very nature God hath *ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come.* This is that which is ſo celebrated by the pſalmiſt, with the higheſt admiration, Pſal. viii. 3. *When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the ſtars which thou haſt ordained;* ver. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* ver. 5. *For thou haſt made him a little lower than the angels, and haſt crowned him with glory and honour.* ver. 6. *Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things under his feet:* ver. 7. *All ſheep and oxen, yea, and the beaſts of the field:* ver. 8. *The foul of the air, and the fiſh of the ſea, and whatſoever paſſeth through the paths of the ſeas.* This is the greateſt privilege we have among all our fellow creatures; this we may glory in, and value ourſelves upon. Thoſe who engage this nature in the ſervice of ſenſual luſts and pleaſures, who think that its *felicity* and *utmoſt capacities* conſiſt in their ſatisfaction, with the accompliſhment of other earthly temporary deſires, are ſatisfied with it in its ſtate of *apoſtacy* from God. But thoſe who have received the light of faith and grace, ſo as rightly to underſtand the being and end of that nature whereof they are partakers, cannot but rejoice in its deliverance from the utmoſt debaſement, into that glorious exaltation, which it hath received in the perſon of Chriſt. And this muſt needs make thoughts of him full of refreſhment unto their ſouls. Let us take care of our perſons; the glory of our nature is ſafe in him. For,

2. In him the *relation of our nature unto God* is eternally ſecured. We were created in a *covenant-relation* unto God. Our nature was related unto him in a way of friendſhip, of likeneſs, and complacency. But the bond of this relation and union was quickly broken by our *apoſtacy* from him. Hereon our whole nature became to be at the utmoſt *moral diſtance* from God, and enmity againſt him, which is the depth

of miſery. But God in infinite wiſdom and grace did deſign once more to recover it, and take it again near unto himſelf. And he would do it in ſuch a way, as ſhould render it utterly impoſſible that there ſhould ever be a *ſeparation* between him and it any more. Heaven and earth may paſs away, but there ſhall never be a diſſolution of the union between God and our nature any more. He did it therefore, by *aſſuming it into a ſubſtantial union with himſelf*, in the perſon of the Son. Hereby the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in it bodily*, or ſubſtantially, and eternally. Hereby is its relation unto God eternally ſecured. And among all the myſterious excellencies which relate hereunto, there are two which continually preſent themſelves unto our conſideration.

(1.) That this nature of ours, is *capable of this glorious exaltation and ſubſiſtence in God.* No creature could conceive how omnipotent wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, could actuate themſelves unto the production of this effect. The myſtery hereof, is the object of the admiration of angels, and will be ſo of the whole church unto all eternity. What is revealed concerning the glory, way and manner of it in the ſcripture, I have declared in my treatiſe concerning the *Myſtery of godlineſs, or the perſon of Chriſt* *. What mind can conceive, what tongue can expreſs, who can ſufficiently admire the wiſdom, goodneſs, and condeſcenſion of God herein! And whereas he hath propoſed unto us this glorious object of our faith and meditation, how vile and fooliſh are we, if we ſpend our thoughts about other things in a neglect of it!

(2.) This is alſo an ineffable pledge of the *love of God* to our nature. For although he will not take it in any other inſtance, ſave *that of the man Chriſt Jeſus*, into this relation with himſelf, by virtue of perſonal union; yet therein he hath given a glorious pledge of his love unto, and valuation of that nature. For *verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* And this kindneſs intends unto our perſons, as participant of that nature. For he deſigned this glory unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, that he might be the firſt-born of the new creation, that we might be made conformable unto him, according to our meaſure; and as the members of that body, whereof he is the head, we are participant in this glory.

3. It is he, in whom our nature hath been carried ſucceſsfully and victoriouſly, through all the oppoſitions that it is liable unto, and even *death itſelf.* But the glory hereof I ſhall ſpeak

* Now printed along with this.

unto diſtinctly in its proper place, which follows, and therefore ſhall here paſs it by.

4. He it is, who in himſelf hath given us a pledge of the capacity of our nature to inhabit thoſe *bleſſed regions of light*, which are far above theſe aſpectable heavens. Here we dwell in tabernacles of clay, that are *cruſhed before the moth*; ſuch as cannot be raiſed, ſo as to abide one foot-breadth above the earth we tread upon. The heavenly luminaries which we can behold, appear too great and glorious for our cohabitation. We are as graſhoppers in our own eyes, in compariſon of thoſe *gigantic* beings; and they ſeem to dwell in places which would immediately ſwallow up, and extinguiſh our natures. How then ſhall we entertain an apprehenſion of being carried and exalted above them all; to have an everlaſting ſubſiſtence in places incomprehenſibly more glorious than the *orbs* wherein they reſide? What capacity is there in our nature of ſuch an habitation? But hereof the Lord Chriſt hath given us a pledge in himſelf. Our nature in him is paſſed through theſe aſpectable heavens, and is exalted far above them. Its eternal habitation is in the bleſſed regions of light and glory; and he hath promiſed, that where he is, there we ſhall be, and that for ever.

Other encouragements there are innumerable to ſtir us up unto diligence in the diſcharge of the duty here propoſed; namely, a continual *contemplation of the glory of Chriſt in his perſon, office, and grace*. Some of them, the principal of them which I have any acquaintance with, are repreſented in the enſuing diſcourſe. I ſhall therefore here add the peculiar advantage which we may obtain in the diligent diſcharge of this duty. Which is, *That it will carry us chearfully, comfortably, and victoriouſly through life and death, and all that we have to conflict withal in either of them.*

And let it be remembered, that I do here ſuppoſe what is written on this ſubject in the enſuing diſcourſe, as being deſigned to prepare the minds of the readers for the due improvement of it.

As unto this *preſent life*, it is well known what it is unto the moſt of them, who concern themſelves in theſe things. Temptations, afflictions, changes, ſorrows dangers, fears, ſickneſs, and pains, do fill up no ſmall part of it. And on the other hand, all our earthly reliſhes, refreſhments and comforts, are uncertain, tranſitory, and unſatisfactory; all things of each ſort being imbittered by the remainders of ſin. Hence every thing wherein we are concerned, hath the root of trouble and

ſorrow in it. Some labour under wants, poverty, and ſtraits, all their days; and ſome have very few hours free from pains and ſickneſs. And all theſe things, with others of an alike nature, are heightned at preſent, by the *calamitous ſeaſon* wherein our lot is fallen. All things almoſt in all nations are filled with confuſions, diſorders, dangers, diſtreſſes, and troubles; wars and rumours of wars, do abound, with tokens of farther approaching judgments; *diſtreſs of nations, with perplexities, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth.* There is in many places *no peace unto him that goeth out, nor to him that cometh in, but great vexations are on the inhabitants of the world; nation is deſtroyed of nation, and city of city, for God doth vex them with all adverſity.* And, in the mean time, *vexation with the ungodly deeds of wicked men,* doth greatly further the troubles of life; the ſufferings of many alſo for the teſtimony of their conſciences are deplorable, with the diviſions and animoſities that abound amongſt all ſorts of Chriſtians.

But the ſhortneſs, the vanity, the miſeries of human life, have been the ſubject of the complaints of all ſort of conſidering perſons, Heathens as well as Chriſtians; nor is it my preſent buſineſs to inſiſt upon them. My inquiry is only after the *relief* which we may obtain againſt all theſe evils, that we faint not under them, that we may have the victory over them. This in general is declared by the apoſtle; 2 Cor. iv. 8. *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair;* ver. 9. *Perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* ver. 16. But *for this cauſe we faint not, but though our outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* ver. 17. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:* ver. 18. *While we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen, are temporal; but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal.*

Our beholding by faith things that are not *ſeen,* things ſpiritual and eternal, will alleviate all our afflictions, make their burden light, and preſerve our ſouls from fainting under them. Of theſe things the *glory of Chriſt,* whereof we treat, is the principal, and in a due ſenſe comprehenſive of them all. For we *behold the glory of God himſelf, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* He that can at all times retreat unto the contemplation of this glory, will be carried above the perplexing prevailing ſenſe of any of theſe evils, of a confluence of them all. *Crus nil ſentit in nervo dum animus eſt in cœlo.*

It is a woful kind of life, when men ſcramble for poor periſhing reliefs in their diſtreſſes. This is the *univerſal remedy* and cure, the only balſam for all our diſeaſes. Whatever preſſeth, urgeth, perplexeth; if we can but retreat in our minds unto a view of this glory, and a due conſideration of our own intereſt therein; comfort and ſupportment will be adminiſtred unto us. Wicked men in their diſtreſſes (which ſometimes overtake them alſo) are like *a troubled ſea that cannot reſt*. Others are heartleſs and deſpond, not without ſecret repining at the wiſe diſpoſals of divine providence, eſpecially when they look on the better conditions (as they ſuppoſe) of others. And the beſt of us are apt all to wax faint and weary, when theſe things preſs upon us in an unuſual manner, or under their long continuance, without a proſpect of relief. This is the *ſtrong hold* which ſuch *priſoners of hope* are to turn themſelves unto. In this contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, they will find reſt unto their own ſouls. For,

1. It will herein, and in the diſcharge of this duty, be made evident, how ſlight and inconſiderable all theſe things are from whence our troubles and diſtreſſes do ariſe. For they all grow on this root of an *overvaluation of temporal things*. And unleſs we can arrive unto a fixed judgment, that all things here below are tranſitory and periſhing, reaching only unto the outward man, or the body (perhaps unto the *killing* of it), that the beſt of them have nothing that is truly ſubſtantial or abiding in them, that there are other things wherein we have an aſſured intereſt, that are incomparably better than they, and above them, it is impoſſible but that we muſt ſpend our lives in fears, ſorrows, and diſtractions. One real *view of the glory of Chriſt*, and of our own concernment therein, will give us a full relief in this matter. For what are all the things of this life, what is the good or evil of them, in compariſon of an intereſt in this tranſcendent glory? When we have due apprehenſions hereof, when our minds are poſſeſſed with thoughts of it, when our affections reach out after its enjoyments, let pain, and ſickneſs, and ſorrows, and fears, and dangers, and death, ſay what they will, we ſhall have in readineſs wherewith to combat with them, and overcome them; and that on this conſideration, that they are all outward, tranſitory, and paſſing away; whereas our minds are fixed on thoſe things which are eternal, and filled with incomprehenſible glory.

2. The minds of men are apt by their troubles to be caſt into *diſorder*, to be toſſed up and down, and diſquieted with various affections and paſſions. So the pſalmiſt found it in

himſelf, in the time of his diſtreſs; whence he calls himſelf unto that account; *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted in me?* And indeed the mind, on all ſuch occaſions, is its own greateſt troubler. It is apt to let looſe its paſſions of fear and ſorrow, which act themſelves in innumerable perplexing thoughts, until it is carried utterly out of its own power. But, in this ſtate, a due contemplation of the *glory of Chriſt* will reſtore and compoſe the mind, bring it into a ſedate quiet frame, wherein faith will be able to ſay unto the winds and waves of diſtempered paſſions, *Peace, be ſtill*, and they ſhall obey it.

3. It is the way and means of conveying a *ſenſe of God's love* unto our ſouls, which is that alone wherein ultimately we find reſt in the midſt of all the troubles of this life, as the apoſtle declares, Rom. v. 2. *By whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* ver. 3. *And not only ſo, but we glory in tribulation alſo, knowing that tribulation worketh patience;* ver. 4. *And patience, experience; and experience, hope:* ver. 5. *And hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us.* It is the Spirit of God, who alone communicates a ſenſe of this love unto our ſouls: it is *ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt.* Howbeit there are ways and means to be uſed on our part, whereby we may be diſpoſed and made meet to receive theſe communications of divine love. Among theſe, the principal is the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt inſiſted on, and of God the Father in him. It is the ſeaſon, it is the way and means, at which and whereby the Holy Ghoſt will give a ſenſe of the love of God unto us, cauſing us thereon to *rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* This will be made evident in the enſuing diſcourſe. This will lift the minds and hearts of believers above all the troubles of this life, and is the ſovereign *antidote* that will expel all the poiſon that is in them, which otherwiſe might perplex and enſlave their ſouls.

I have but touched on theſe things, as deſigning to enlarge ſomewhat on that which doth enſue. And this is the advantage we may have in the diſcharge of this duty with reſpect unto *death itſelf.* It is the *aſſiduous contemplation of the glory of Chriſt*, which will carry us chearfully and comfortably into it, and through it. My principal work having been now for a long ſeaſon to *die daily*, as living in a continual expectation of my diſſolution, I ſhall on this occaſion acquaint the reader with

ſome few of my thoughts and reliefs, with reference unto death itſelf.

There are ſundry things required of us, that we may be able to encounter death chearfully, conſtantly, and victoriouſly. For want of theſe, or ſome of them, I have known gracious ſouls, who have lived in a *kind of bondage for fear of death* all their days. We know not how God will manage any of our minds and ſouls in that ſeaſon, in that trial. For he acts towards us in all ſuch things, in a way of ſovereignty. But theſe are the things which he requireth of us in a way of duty.

Firſt, Peculiar actings of faith to reſign and commit our departing ſouls into the hand of him, who is able to receive them, to keep and preſerve them, alſo to diſpoſe of them into a ſtate of reſt and bleſſedneſs, are required of us.

The ſoul is now parting with all things here below, and that for ever. None of all the things which it hath ſeen, heard or enjoyed, by its own outward ſenſes, can be prevailed with to ſtay with it one hour, or take one ſtep with it, in the voyage wherein it is engaged. It muſt alone by itſelf launch into eternity. It is entering an *inviſible world*, which it knows no more of than it hath received by faith. None hath come from the dead to inform us of the ſtate of the other world. Yea, God ſeems on purpoſe ſo to conceal it from us, that we ſhould have no evidence of it, at leaſt as unto the manner of things in it, but what is given unto faith by divine revelation. Hence thoſe who died and were raiſed again from the dead, unto any continuance among men, as Lazarus, probably knew nothing of the inviſible ſtate. Their ſouls were preſerved by the power of God in their being, but bound up as unto preſent operations. This made a great emperor cry out, on the approach of death, *O animula, tremula, vagula, blandula; quæ nunc abibis in loca horrida, ſqualida!* &c. "O "poor trembling, wandering ſoul, into what places of dark-"neſs and defilement art thou going!"

How is it like to be after the few moments, which under the pangs of death we have to continue in this world? Is it an *annihilation* that lies at the door? Is death the deſtruction of our whole being, ſo as that after it we ſhall be no more? So ſome would have the ſtate of things to be. Is it a ſtate of ſubſiſtence in a wandering condition, up and down the world, under the influence of other more powerful ſpirits that rule in the air, viſiting tombs and ſolitary places, and ſometimes making appearances of themſelves by the impreſſions of thoſe more powerful ſpirits, as ſome imagine from

the ſtory concerning Samuel and the witch of Endor, and as it is commonly received in the Papacy, out of a compliance with their imagination of purgatory? Or is it a ſtate of univerſal miſery and wo? a ſtate incapable of comfort or joy? Let them pretend what they pleaſe, who can underſtand no comfort or joy in this life, but what they receive by their ſenſes, they can look for nothing elſe. And whatever be the ſtate of this inviſible world, the ſoul can undertake nothing of its own conduct after its departure from the body. It knows that it muſt be abſolutely at the diſpoſal of another.

Wherefore no man can comfortably venture on, and into this condition, but in the exerciſe of that faith, which enables him to reſign and give up his departing ſoul into the hand of God, who alone is able to receive it, and to diſpoſe it into a condition of reſt and bleſſedneſs. So ſpeaks the apoſtle, *I am not aſhamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day.*

Herein, as in all other graces, is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt our great example. He reſigned his departing ſpirit into the hands of his Father, to be owned and preſerved by him, in its ſtate of ſeparation. *Father, into thy hands I commit my ſpirit,* Luke xxiii. 46.; as did the pſalmiſt, his type, in a like condition, Pſal. xxxi. 5. But the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt herein, the object and exerciſe of it, what he believed and truſted unto in this reſignation of his ſpirit into the hand of God, is at large expreſſed in the 16th Pſalm, ver. 8.—11. I *have* (ſaith he) *ſet the Lord always before me: becauſe he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope. For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption. Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life: in thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* He left his ſoul in the hand of God, in full aſſurance that it ſhould ſuffer no evil in its ſtate of ſeparation, but ſhould be brought again with his body into a bleſſed reſurrection, and eternal glory. So Stephen reſigned his ſoul, departing under violence, into the hands of Chriſt himſelf. When he died, he ſaid, *Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit.*

This is the laſt victorious act of faith, wherein its conqueſt over its laſt enemy death itſelf doth conſiſt. Herein the ſoul ſays, in and unto itſelf, Thou art now taking leave of time unto eternity; all things about thee are departing as ſhades, and will immediately diſappear. The things which thou art

entering into are yet inviſible; ſuch as *eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor will they enter into the heart of man fully to conceive.* Now therefore with quietneſs and confidence give up thyſelf unto the ſovereign power, grace, truth, and faithfulneſs of God, and thou ſhalt find aſſured reſt and peace.

But Jeſus Chriſt it is, who doth immediately receive the ſouls of them who believe in him. So we ſee in the inſtance of Stephen. And what can be a greater encouragement to reſign them into his hands, than a daily contemplation of his glory in his perſon, his power, his exaltation, his office and grace? Who that believes in him, that belongs unto him, can fear to commit his departing ſpirit unto his love, power and care? Even we alſo ſhall hereby, in our dying moments, ſee, by faith, heaven opened, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God, ready to receive us. This is added unto the love which all believers have unto the Lord Jeſus, which is enflamed by contemplation of his glory, and their deſires to be with him where he is; it will ſtrengthen and confirm our minds in the reſignation of our departing ſouls into his hand.

Secondly, It is required in us unto the ſame end, that we be *ready and willing to part with the fleſh, wherewith we are cloathed* with all things that are uſeful and deſirable thereunto. The alliance, the relation, the friendſhip, the union, that are between the ſoul and the body, are the greateſt, the neareſt, the firmeſt, that are or can be among mere created beings. There is nothing like it, nothing equal unto it. The union of three perſons in the one ſingle divine nature, and the union of two natures in one perſon of Chriſt, are infinite, ineffable, and exempted from all compariſon. But among created beings, the union of theſe two eſſential parts of the ſame nature in one perſon, is moſt excellent. Nor is any equal to it, or like it, found in any other creatures. Thoſe who among them have moſt of life, have either no bodies, as angels; or no ſouls but what periſh with them, as all brute creatures below.

Angels being pure material ſpirits, have nothing in them, nothing belonging unto their eſſence that can die. *Beaſts* have nothing in them that can live when their bodies die. The ſoul of a *beaſt* cannot be preſerved in a *ſeparate condition*, no, not by an act of almighty power; for it is not; and that which is not, cannot live. It is nothing but the body itſelf in an act of its material powers.

Only the nature of man, in all the works of God, is capable of this convulſion. The eſſential parts of it are ſeparable by death, the one continuing to exiſt and act its eſpecial powers

in a ſeparate ſtate or condition. The powers of the whole entire nature acting in ſoul and body in conjunction, are all ſcattered and loſt by death. But the powers of *one eſſential part* of the ſame nature, that is, of the ſoul, are preſerved after death in a more perfect acting and exerciſe than before. This is peculiar unto human nature, as a mean partaking of heaven and earth, of the perfection of angels above, and of the imperfection of the beaſts below. Only there is this difference in theſe things: our participation of the heavenly ſpiritual perfections of the *angelical nature*, is for eternity; our participation of the imperfections of the animate creatures here below, is but for a ſeaſon. For God hath deſigned our bodies unto ſuch a glorious refinement at the reſurrection, as that they ſhall have no more alliance unto that brutiſh nature, which periſheth for ever. For we ſhall be like unto angels, or equal to them. Our bodies ſhall no more be capable of thoſe acts and operations which are now common to us with other living creatures here below.

This is the pre-eminence of the nature of man, as the wiſe man declares. For unto that objection of *atheiſtical Epicureans*, *As the one dieth, ſo dieth the other; they have all one breath, ſo that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beaſt, and all go into one place, all are of the duſt, and all turn to duſt again:* he granteth, that as unto their bodies it is for a ſeaſon, in them we have preſent participation of their nature; but, ſaith he, here lieth the difference, *who knoweth the ſpirit of a man that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of a beaſt that goeth downward unto the earth?* Unleſs we know this, unleſs we conſider the different ſtate of the ſpirit of men and beaſts, we cannot be delivered from this atheiſm; but the thoughts hereof will ſet us at liberty from it. They die in like manner, and their bodies go equally to the duſt for a ſeaſon; but the beaſt hath no ſpirit, no ſoul, but what dies with the body, and goes to the duſt. If they had, their bodies alſo muſt be raiſed again unto a conjunction with them. Otherwiſe death would produce a new race of creatures unto eternity. But man hath an immortal ſoul, ſaith he, an heavenly ſpirit, which, when the body goes into the duſt for a ſeaſon, aſcends to heaven, (where the guilt of ſin, and the curſe of the law, interpoſe not), from whence it is there to exiſt and to act all its native powers in a ſtate of bleſſedneſs.

But, as I ſaid, by reaſon of this peculiar intimate union and relation between the ſoul and body, there is in the whole nature a fixed averſation from a diſſolution. The ſoul and body

are naturally and neceſſarily unwilling to fall into a ſtate of ſeparation, wherein the one ſhall ceaſe to be what it was, and the other knows not clearly how it ſhall ſubſiſt. The body claſpeth about the ſoul, and the ſoul receiveth ſtrange impreſſions from its embraces, the entire nature exiſting in the union of them both, being unalterably averſe unto a diſſolution.

Wherefore, unleſs we can overcome this inclination, we can never die comfortably or chearfully. We would indeed rather chuſe to be *cloathed upon, that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life*, that the cloathing of glory might come on our whole nature, ſoul and body, without diſſolution. But if this may not be, yet then do believers ſo conquer this inclination by faith, and views of the glory of Chriſt, as to attain a deſire of this diſſolution. So the apoſtle teſtifies of himſelf, *I have a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better* than to abide here, Phil. i. 23. Not an ordinary deſire, not that which worketh in me now and then, but a conſtant habitual inclination working in vehement acts and deſires. And what doth he ſo deſire? It is to *depart*, ſay we, out of this body, from this tabernacle, to leave it for a ſeaſon. But it is ſuch a departure as conſiſts in the *diſſolution* of the preſent ſtate of his being, that it ſhould not be what it is. But how is it poſſible that a man ſhould attain ſuch an inclination unto ſuch a readineſs for ſuch a vehement deſire of a *diſſolution?* It is from a view, by faith, of Chriſt and his glory, whence the ſoul is ſatisfied, that to be with him is incomparably better than in its preſent ſtate and condition.

He therefore that would die comfortably, muſt be able to ſay within himſelf, and to himſelf, Die then, thou frail and ſinful fleſh; *duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return;* I yield thee up unto the righteous doom of the holy One. Yet therein alſo I give thee into the hand of the great Refiner, who will hide thee in thy grave, and by thy conſumption purify thee from all thy corruption and diſpoſition to evil. And otherwiſe this will not be. After a long ſincere endeavour for the mortification of all ſin, I find it will never be abſolutely perfect, but by this reduction into the duſt. Thou ſhalt no more be a reſidence for the leaſt remainder of ſin unto eternity, nor any clog unto my ſoul in its actings on God. Reſt therefore in hope: for God, in his appointed ſeaſon, when he *ſhall have a deſire unto the work of his hands, will call unto thee, and thou ſhalt anſwer him out of the duſt.* Then ſhall he, by an act of his almighty power, not only reſtore thee unto

thy priſtine glory, as at the firſt creation, when thou waſt the pure workmanſhip of his hands; but enrich and adorn thee with inconceivable privileges and advantages. Be not then afraid; away with all reluctancy; go into the duſt, reſt in hope, for *thou ſhalt ſtand in thy lot at the end of the days.*

That which will enable us hereunto, in an eminent manner, is that view and conſideration of the *glory of Chriſt*, which is the ſubject of the enſuing Meditations. For he who is now poſſeſſed of all that glory, underwent this diſſolution of nature as truly and really as ever we ſhall do.

Thirdly, There is required hereunto, a readineſs to comply with the *times and ſeaſons* wherein God would have us depart and leave this world. Many think they ſhall be willing to die when their time is come; but they have many reaſons, as they ſuppoſe, to deſire that it may not yet be, which, for the moſt part, ariſe merely from fear, and an averſation of death. Some deſire to live, that they may ſee more of that *glorious work of God for his church*, which they believe he will accompliſh. So Moſes prayed that he might not die in the Wilderneſs, but *go over Jordan, and ſee the good land, and that goodly mountain, and Lebanon*, the ſeat of the church, and of the worſhip of God; which yet God thought meet to deny unto him. And this denial of the requeſt of Moſes, made on the higheſt conſideration poſſible, is inſtructive unto all in the like caſe. Others may judge themſelves to have ſome work to do in the world, wherein they ſuppoſe that the glory of God, and the good of the church is concerned, and therefore ſhould be ſpared for a ſeaſon. Paul knew not clearly whether it were not beſt for him to abide a while longer in the fleſh on this account. And David often deprecates the preſent ſeaſon of death, becauſe of the work which he had to do for God in the world. Others riſe no higher than there own private intereſts or concerns, with reſpect unto their perſons, their families, their relations, and goods in this world. They would ſee theſe things in a better and more ſettled condition before they die, and then they ſhall be moſt willing ſo to do. But it is the love of life that lies at the bottom of all theſe deſires in men, which of itſelf will never forſake them. But no man can die *chearfully* or *comfortably*, who lives not in a conſtant reſignation of the *time and ſeaſon of his death* unto the will of God, as well as himſelf, with reſpect unto death itſelf. *Our times are in his hand*, at his ſovereign diſpoſal; and his will in all things muſt be complied withal. Without this reſolution, without this reſignation, no man can enjoy the leaſt ſolid peace in this world.

Fourthly, As the times and ſeaſons, ſo the *ways and means* of the approaches of death have eſpecial trials, which, unleſs we are prepared for them, will keep us under bondage with the fear of death itſelf. *Long waſting*, *wearing conſumptions*, *burning fevers*, *ſtrong pains of the ſtone*, or the like, from within, or *ſword*, *fire*, *tortures*, with *ſhame* and *reproach* from without, may be in the way of the acceſs of death unto us. Some who have been wholly freed from all fears of death, as a diſſolution of nature, who have looked on it as amiable, and deſirable in itſelf, have yet had great exerciſe in their minds about theſe ways of its approach: they have earneſtly deſired, that this peculiar *bitterneſs of the cup* might be taken away. To get above all perplexities on the account of theſe things, is part of our wiſdom in dying daily. And we are to have always in a readineſs, thoſe graces and duties which are neceſſary thereunto. Such are a conſtant *reſignation* of ourſelves, *in all events*, unto the ſovereign will, pleaſure, and diſpoſal of God. *May he not do what he will with his own?* is it not right and meet it ſhould be ſo? Is not his will in all things infinitely holy, wiſe, juſt, and good? Doth he not know what is beſt for us, and what conduceth moſt unto his own glory? doth not he alone do ſo? So is it to live in the *exerciſe of faith*, that if God calls us unto any of theſe things, which are peculiarly dreadful unto our natures, he will give us ſuch ſupplies of *ſpiritual ſtrength* and patience, as ſhall enable us to undergo them, if not with eaſe and joy, yet with peace and quietneſs beyond our expectation. Multitudes have had experience, that thoſe things which *at a diſtance* have had an aſpect of *overwhelming dread*, have been far from unſupportable in their approach, when ſtrength hath been received from above to encounter with them. And moreover it is in this caſe required, that we be frequent and ſteady in comparing theſe things with thoſe which are *eternal*, both as unto the miſery which we are freed from, and that bleſſedneſs which is prepared for us. But I ſhall proceed no farther with theſe particulars.

There is none of all the things we have inſiſted on, neither the *reſignation of a departing ſoul into the hand of God*, nor a *willingneſs to lay down his fleſh in the duſt*, nor a *readineſs to comply with the will of God, as to the times and ſeaſons, or the way and manner of the approach of death*, that can be attained unto, without a proſpect of that glory that ſhall give us a new ſtate, far more excellent than what we here leave or depart from. This we cannot have, whatever we pretend, unleſs we have ſome

preſent views of the glory of Chriſt. An apprehenſion of the future manifeſtation of it in heaven will not relieve us, if here we know not what it is, and wherein it doth conſiſt; if we have not ſome previous diſcovery of it in this life. This is that which will make all things eaſy and pleaſant unto us, even death itſelf, as it is a means to bring us unto its full enjoyment.

Other great and glorious advantages, which may be obtained in the diligent diſcharge of the duty here propoſed, might be inſiſted on; but that the things themſelves diſcourſed of will evidently diſcover, and direct us unto the ſpring and reaſons of them: beſides, weakneſs, wearineſs, and the near approaches of death, do call me off from any further labour in this kind.

MEDITATIONS

AND

DISCOURSES

ON THE

Glory of Chriſt, &c.

JOHN xvii. 24.

Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.

THE high prieſt under the law, when he was to enter into the holy place on the ſolemn day of atonement, was to take *both his hands full of ſweet incenſe* from the *golden table of incenſe*, to carry along with him in his entrance. He had alſo a *cenſer* filled with *fire*, that was taken from the altar of *burnt-offerings*, where atonement was made for ſin with blood. Upon his actual entrance through the vail, he put the *incenſe on the fire in the cenſer*, until the *cloud of its ſmoke* covered the *ark*, and the *mercy-ſeat*. See Lev. xvi. 12, 13. And the end hereof was to preſent unto God, in the behalf of the people, a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour from the ſacrifice of propitiation. See the declaration of theſe things in our Expoſition of Heb. ix.

In anſwer unto this *myſtical type*, the great *High Prieſt* of the church, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, being to enter into the *holy place not made with hands*, did by the glorious prayer recorded in this chapter, influenced from the *blood of his ſacrifice*, fill the heavens above, the glorious place of God's reſidence, with a *cloud of incenſe*, or the *ſweet perfume* of his bleſſed interceſſion, typified by the *incenſe* offered by the high prieſt of old. By the ſame *eternal fire*, wherewith he offered himſelf a *bloody ſacrifice* to make atonement for ſin, he kindled in his moſt holy ſoul, thoſe deſires for the *application* of all its benefits unto his *church*, which are here expreſſed, and wherein his interceſſion doth conſiſt. It is only one paſſage in the verſe above named, that at preſent I deſign an inquiry into. And this is the *ſubject-matter* of what the Lord Chriſt here deſires,

in the behalf of thoſe *given him by the Father*, namely, that they may *behold his glory*.

It is evident, that in this prayer the Lord Chriſt hath reſpect unto his *own glory*, and the *manifeſtation* of it, which he had in the entrance aſked of the Father, ver. 4, 5. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* But, in this place, he hath not ſo much reſpect unto it as *his own*, as unto the advantage, benefit, ſatisfaction, and bleſſedneſs of his diſciples, in the *beholding* of it. For theſe things were the end of all that *mediatory glory* which was given unto him. So Joſeph charged his *brethren*, when he had revealed himſelf unto them, that they ſhould *tell his father of all his glory in Egypt*, Gen. xlv. 13. This he did, not for an *oſtentation* of his own glory, but for the *ſatisfaction* which he knew his father would take in the knowledge of it. And ſuch a *manifeſtation of his glory* unto his diſciples, doth the Lord Chriſt here deſire, as might fill them with bleſſed ſatisfaction for evermore.

This alone which is here prayed for, will give them ſuch ſatisfaction, and nothing elſe. The hearts of believers are like the *needle* touched by the *load-ſtone*, which cannot reſt until it comes to the point whereunto, by the ſecret virtue of it, it is directed. For being once touched by the love of Chriſt, receiving therein an impreſſion of ſecret ineffable virtue, they will ever be in motion, and reſtleſs, until they come unto him, and *behold his glory*. That ſoul which can be ſatisfied *without it*, that cannot be eternally ſatisfied *with it*, is not partaker of the efficacy of his interceſſion.

I ſhall lay the foundation of the enſuing Meditations in this one aſſertion, namely, *That one of the greateſt privileges and advancements of believers, both in this world, and unto eternity, conſiſts in their* BEHOLDING THE GLORY OF CHRIST. This therefore he deſires for them in this ſolemn interceſſion, as the complement of all his other requeſts in their behalf; that they may *behold my glory*; that they may *ſee, view, behold* or contemplate on *my glory*. The reaſons why I aſſign not this glorious privilege only unto the *heavenly ſtate*, which is principally reſpected in this place, but apply it unto the ſtate of believers in this world alſo, with their duties and privileges therein, ſhall be immediately declared.

All unbelievers do in their heart call Chriſt *Ichabod, where is the glory?* They ſee neither *form nor comelineſs in him*, that

he ſhould be deſired. They look on him as Michal Saul's daughter did on David *dancing before the ark*, when ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart. They do not indeed (many of them) *call Jeſus anathema*, but cry, *Hail Maſter*, and then crucify him.

Hence have we ſo many curſed opinions advanced in derogation unto his glory, ſome of them really deſtructive of all that is truly ſo; yea, denying the *only Lord that bought us*, and ſubſtituting a falſe Chriſt in his room. And others there are who expreſs their ſlight thoughts of him and his glory, by bold irreverent inquiries, *of what uſe his perſon is in our religion*; as though there were any thing in our religion, that hath either reality, ſubſtance, or truth, but by virtue of its relation thereunto. And by their *anſwers*, they bring their own *inquiries* yet nearer unto the borders of blaſphemy.

Never was there an age ſince the name of Chriſtians was known upon the earth, wherein there was ſuch a direct oppoſition made unto the *perſon and glory of Chriſt*, as there is in that wherein we live. There were indeed in the firſt times of the church, ſwarms of proud, doting, brainſick perſons, who vented many fooliſh imaginations about him, which iſſued at length in *Arianiſm*, in whoſe ruins they were buried. The *gates of hell* in them, prevailed not againſt the Rock on which the church is built. But as it was ſaid of Cæſar, *Solus acceſſit ſobrius, ad perdendam rempublicam*; "He alone went ſoberly "about the deſtruction of the commonwealth;" ſo we now have great numbers who oppoſe the perſon and glory of Chriſt under a pretence of *ſobriety of reaſon*, as they vainly plead. Yea, the diſbelief of the myſteries of the *Trinity, and the incarnation of the Son of God*, the ſole foundation of Chriſtian religion, is ſo diffuſed in the world, as that it hath almoſt devoured the power and the vitals of it. And not a few, who dare not yet expreſs their mind, do give broad intimations of their intentions and good-will towards him, in making them the object of their ſcorn and reproach, who deſire to know nothing but him, and him crucified.

God in his appointed time, will effectually vindicate his *honour* and *glory* from the vain attempts of men of corrupt minds againſt them.

In the mean time, it is the duty of all thoſe who love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, to give teſtimony in a peculiar manner unto his divine perſon and glory, according unto their ſeveral capacities, becauſe of the oppoſition that is made againſt them.

I have thought myſelf on many accounts obliged to caſt my

mite into this treaſury. And I have choſen ſo to do, not in a way of *controverſy*, (which formerly I have engaged in), but ſo, as together with the vindication of the truth, to promote the ſtrengthening of the faith of true believers, their edification in the knowledge of it; and to expreſs the experience which they have, or may have of the power and reality of theſe things.

That which at preſent I deſign to demonſtrate, is, That the *beholding of the glory of Chriſt, is one of the greateſt privileges and advancements that believers are capable of in this world, or that which is to come.* It is that whereby they are firſt gradually *conformed* unto it, and then fixed in the eternal *enjoyment* of it. For here in this life, *beholding his glory, they are changed* (or *transformed*) *into the likeneſs of it*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.; and hereafter, they ſhall be *for ever like unto him*, becauſe they *ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 1, 2. Hereon do our preſent comforts, and future bleſſedneſs depend. This the life and reward of our ſouls. He that *hath ſeeen him, hath ſeen the Father alſo*, John xiv. 9. For we diſcern the *light of the knowledge of God, only in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

There are, therefore, two ways or degrees *of beholding the glory of Chriſt*, which are conſtantly diſtinguiſhed in the ſcripture. The one is by *faith* in this world, which is the evidence of things not ſeen. The other is by *ſight*, or immediate viſion in eternity, 2 Cor. v. 7. *We walk by faith, and not by ſight.* We do ſo whilſt we are in this world, *whilſt we are preſent in the body, and abſent from the Lord*, ver. 8. But we ſhall live and walk by *ſight* hereafter. And it is the Lord Chriſt and his glory, which are immediate objects both of this *faith* and *ſight*. For we here *behold him darkly in a glaſs*, (that is, by faith), *but we ſhall ſee him face to face*, (by immediate viſion.) *Now we know him in part; but then we ſhall know him as we are known*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. What is the difference between theſe two ways of *beholding the glory of Chriſt*, ſhall be afterwards declared.

It is the ſecond way, namely, by *viſion* in the light of glory, that is principally included in that prayer of our bleſſed Saviour, that his diſciples may be *where he is, to behold his glory*. But I ſhall not confine my inquiry thereunto; nor doth our Lord Jeſus exclude from his deſire, that ſight of his glory which we have *by faith* in this world; but prays for the perfection of it in heaven. It is therefore the *firſt way*, that in the firſt place I ſhall inſiſt upon, and that for the reaſons enſuing.

1. No man ſhall ever behold the glory of Chriſt by *ſight*

hereafter, who doth not in ſome meaſure behold it by *faith* here in this world. *Grace* is a neceſſary preparation for *glory*, and *faith* for *ſight*. Where the ſubject, the ſoul, is not previouſly ſeaſoned with *grace* and *faith*, it is not capable of *glory*, or *viſion*. Nay, perſons not diſpoſed hereby unto it, cannot deſire it, whatever they pretend; they only deceive their own ſouls, in ſuppoſing that ſo they do. Moſt men will ſay with confidence, living and dying, *that they deſire to be with Chriſt, and to behold his glory;* but they can give no reaſon, why they ſhould deſire any ſuch thing; only they think it ſomewhat that is better than to be in that evil condition which otherwiſe they muſt be caſt into for ever, when they can be here no more. If a man pretend himſelf to be enamoured on, or greatly to deſire what he never *ſaw*, nor was ever repreſented unto him, he doth but dote on his own imaginations. And the pretended deſires of many, to *behold the glory of Chriſt* in heaven, who have no view of it by faith whilſt they are here in this world, are nothing but ſelf-deceiving imaginations.

So do the Papiſts delude themſelves. Their carnal affections are excited by their outward ſenſes, to delight in *images* of Chriſt, in his ſufferings, his reſurrection, and glory above. Hereon they ſatisfy themſelves, that they *behold the glory of Chriſt* himſelf, and that with love and great delight. But whereas there is not the leaſt true repreſentation made of the Lord Chriſt, or his glory, in theſe things, that being confined abſolutely unto the goſpel alone, and this way of attempting it being laid under a ſevere interdict, they do but ſport themſelves with their own deceivings.

The apoſtle tells us concerning himſelf, and other believers, when the Lord Chriſt was preſent, and converſed with them in the days of his fleſh, that they *ſaw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14. And we may inquire, what was this glory of Chriſt, which they ſo ſaw, and by what means they obtained a proſpect of it. For, (1.) It was not the glory of his *outward condition*, as we behold the glory and grandeur of the kings and potentates of the earth; for he made *himſelf of no reputation*, but being in the form of a ſervant, he walked in the condition of a man of low degree. The ſecular grandeur of his *pretended vicar*, makes no repreſentation of that glory of his, which his diſciples ſaw. He kept no court, nor houſe of entertainment, nor (though he made all things) had of his own where to lay his head. Nor, (2.) Was it with reſpect to the outward form of the *fleſh which he was made*, wherein he took our nature on him, as we

ſee the glory of a comely or beautiful perſon; for he had therein neither *form nor comelineſs*, that he ſhould be deſired, *his viſage was ſo marred more than any man, and his form more than the ſons of men*, Iſa. lii. 14. chap. liii. 2, 3. All things appeared in him as became *a man of ſorrows*. Nor, (3.) Was it abſolutely the *eternal eſſential glory of his divine nature*, that is intended. For this no man can ſee in this world. What we ſhall attain in a view thereof hereafter, we know not. But, (4.) It was his glory, as he was *full of grace and truth*. They ſaw the glory of his perſon and his office in the adminiſtration of *grace and truth*. And how, or by what means did they ſee this glory of Chriſt? It was by *faith*, and no otherwiſe. For this privilege was granted unto them only who *received him, and believed on his name*, John i. 12. This was that glory which John Baptiſt ſaw, when upon his coming unto him he ſaid unto all that were preſent, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world*, John i. 29.—33.

Wherefore let no man deceive himſelf: he that hath no *ſight* of the glory of Chriſt here, ſhall never have any of it heareafter unto his advantage. It is not therefore unto edification, to diſcourſe of beholding the glory of Chriſt in heaven by *viſion*, until we go through a trial, whether we ſee any thing of it in this world by *faith* or no.

2. The *beholding of Chriſt in glory*, is that which in itſelf is too high, illuſtrious, and marvelous for us in our preſent condition. It hath a ſplendor and glory too great for our preſent ſpiritual *viſive faculty*; as the direct, immediate ſight of the ſun darkens our ſight, and doth not relieve or ſtrengthen it at all. Wherefore we have no way to take into our minds any true ſpiritual apprehenſions of the nature of *immediate viſion*, or what it is to ſee the glory of Chriſt in heaven, but by that *view* which we have by *faith* in this life of the ſame glory. Whatever otherwiſe falls into our minds, is but conjecture and imagination; ſuch as are the contemplations of moſt about heavenly things.

I have ſeen and read ſomewhat of the writings of learned men, concerning the *ſtate of future glory*; ſome of them are filled with *excellent notions of truth*, and *elegancy of ſpeech*, whereby they cannot but much effect the minds of them who duly conſider what they ſay. But I know not well whence it comes to paſs, many complain, that in reading of ſuch diſcourſes, they are like a man who *behold his natural face in a glaſs, and immediately forgets what manner of man he was*; as one of old complained to the ſame purpoſe upon his peruſal of Plato's

contemplations about the immortality of the ſoul. The things ſpoken do not abide nor incorporate with our minds. They *pleaſe* and *refreſh* for a little while, like a ſhower of rain in a dry ſeaſon, that ſoaketh not unto the roots of things; the power of them doth not enter into us. It is not all from hence, that their *notions of future things* are not induced out of the *experience* which we have of the beginnings of them in this world; without which, they can make no permanent abode in our minds, nor continue any influence upon our affections? Yea, the ſoul is diſturbed, not edified, in all *contemplations of future glory*, when things are propoſed unto it, whereof in this life it hath neither foretaſte, ſenſe, experience, nor evidence. No man ought to look for any thing in heaven, but what one way or other he hath ſome *experience* of in this life. If men were fully perſuaded hereof, they would be, it may be, more in the exerciſe of faith and love about heavenly things, than for the moſt part they are. At preſent they know not what they enjoy, and they look for they know not what.

Hence is it that men, utterly ſtrangers unto all experience of the beginning of glory in themſelves as an effect of faith, have filled their divine worſhip with *images*, *pictures*, and *muſic*, to repreſent unto themſelves ſomewhat of that glory which they fancy to be above. For into that which is truly ſo, they have no proſpect, nor can have; becauſe they have no experience of its power in themſelves; nor do they taſte of its goodneſs by any of its firſt-fruits in their own minds. Wherefore by that view alone, and not otherwiſe, which we have of the *glory of Chriſt by faith* here in this world, we may attain ſuch bleſſed conceptions of our beholding *his glory above* by *immediate viſion*, as ſhall draw out our hearts unto the admiration of it, and deſires of its full enjoyment.

3. Herein then our preſent *edification* is principally concerned. For in this preſent *beholding of the glory of Chriſt*, the life and power of faith are moſt eminently acted. And from this exerciſe of *faith*, doth *love* unto Chriſt principally, if not ſolely ariſe and ſpring. If therefore we deſire to have *faith in its vigour*, or *love in its power*, giving reſt, complacency, and ſatisfaction unto our own ſouls, we are to ſeek for them in the diligent diſcharge of this duty; elſewhere they will not be found. Herein would I live; herein would I die; hereon would I dwell in my thoughts and affections, to the withering and conſumption of all the painted beauties of this world, unto the crucifying all things here below, until they become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way meet for affec-

tionate embraces. For theſe, and the like reaſons, I ſhall firſt inquire into our beholding of the *glory of Chriſt in this world by faith;* and therein endeavour to lead the ſouls of them that believe, into the more retired walks of faith, love, and holy meditation, *whereby the king his held in his galleries*, Cant. vii. 5.

But becauſe there is no benefit in, nor advantage by the contemplation of this ſacred truth, but what conſiſts in an improvement of the practice of the duty declared in it, namely, the *conſtant beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith.* I ſhall for the promotion of it, premiſe ſome few advantages which we may have thereby.

1. We ſhall hereby be made *fit and meet for heaven.* Every man is not ſo, who deſires it, and hopes for it. For ſome are not only unworthy of it, and excluded from it by reaſon of ſin; but they are *unmeet* for it, and incapable of any advantage by it. All men indeed think themſelves *fit enough for glory*, (what ſhould hinder them?) if they could attain it. But it is becauſe they know not what it is. Men ſhall not be *cloathed with glory*, as it were, whether they will or no. It is to be received in that exerciſe of the faculties of their ſouls, which ſuch perſons have no ability for. Muſic hath no pleaſure in it unto them that cannot hear; nor the moſt beautiful colours unto them that cannot ſee. It would be no benefit unto a fiſh to take him from the bottom of the ocean, filled with cold and darkneſs, and to place him under the beams of the ſun. For he is no way meet to receive any refreſhment thereby. Heaven itſelf would not be more advantageous unto perſons not renewed by the Spirit of grace in this life.

Hence the apoſtle gives thanks *unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light*, Col. i. 2. Indeed the beginning here, and the fulneſs of glory hereafter, are communicated unto believers by an almighty act of the will and grace of God. But yet he hath ordained ways and means whereby they may be made *meet receptive ſubjects* of the glory ſo to be communicated unto them. That this way and means is by the *beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith*, ſhall be fully declared in our progreſs. This therefore ſhould excite us unto this duty; for all our *preſent* glory conſiſts in our preparation for *future* glory.

2. No man can by faith take a real view of this glory, but *virtue will proceed from it* in a tranſforming power, to *change him into the ſame image*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. How this is done, and how we become like unto Chriſt, by beholding his glory, ſhall be fully declared in our progreſs.

3. The conſtant contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, will give reſt, ſatisfaction, and complacency unto the ſouls of them who are exerciſed therein. Our minds are apt to be filled with a multitude of perplexed thoughts, fears, cares, dangers, diſtreſſes, paſſions, and luſts, which make various impreſſions on the minds of men, filling them with diſorder, darkneſs, and confuſion. But where the ſoul is fixed in its thoughts and contemplations on this glorious object, it will be brought into, and kept in an holy, ſerene, ſpiritual frame. For to be *ſpiritually minded is life and peace.* And this it doth, by taking off our hearts from all undue regard unto all things below, in compariſon of the great worth, beauty, and glory of what we are converſant withal: Phil. iii. 7. *But what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt.* ver. 8. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord; for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt,* ver. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith:* ver. 10. *That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death;* ver. 11. *If by any means I might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead.* A defect herein makes many of us ſtrangers unto an heavenly life; and to live beneath the ſpiritual refreſhments and ſatisfactions that the goſpel doth tender unto us.

4. The ſight of the glory of Chriſt, is the ſpring and cauſe of our everlaſting bleſſedneſs. We *ſhall be ever with the Lord,* 1 Theſ. iv. 17.; or, *be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all,* Phil. i. 23. For there ſhall we *behold his glory,* John xvii. 24. and by *ſeeing him as he is, we ſhall be made like him,* 1 John iii. 2. which is our everlaſting bleſſedneſs.

The enjoyment of God by *ſight,* is commonly called the *beatific viſion;* and it it is the ſole fountain of all the actings of our ſouls in the ſtate of bleſſedneſs, which the old philoſophers knew nothing of; neither do we know diſtinctly what they are, or what is this ſight of God. Howbeit, this we know, that God in his *immenſe eſſence* is *inviſible* unto our corporeal eyes, and will be ſo to eternity; as alſo *incomprehenſible* unto our minds. For nothing can perfectly comprehend that which is infinite, but what is itſelf infinite. Wherefore the bleſſed and *bleſſing ſight* which we ſhall have of God, will be always in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. Therein will that manifeſtation of the glory of God in his infinite perfections, and all

their bleſſed operation, ſo ſhine into our ſouls, as ſhall immediately fill us with peace, reſt, and glory.

Theſe things we here admire, but cannot comprehend. We know not well what we ſay, when we ſpeak of them; yet it there is in true believers a foreſight and foretaſte of this glorious condition. There enters ſometimes by the word and Spirit in their hearts, ſuch a ſenſe of the *uncreated glory* of God, ſhining forth in Chriſt, as effects and ſatiates their ſouls with ineffable joy. Hence ariſeth that *peace of God* which is *above all underſtanding*, keeping our hearts and minds through Jeſus Chriſt, Phil. iv. 7. *Chriſt in believers the hope of glory*, gives them to taſte of the firſt-fruits of it; yea, ſometimes to bathe their ſouls in the *fountain of life*, and to *drink of the rivers of pleaſure* that are at his right hand. Where any are utterly unacquainted with theſe things, they are carnal, yea, blind, *and ſeeing nothing afar off*. Theſe enjoyments indeed are rare, and for the moſt part of ſhort continuance. *Rara hora, brevis mora.* But it is from our own ſloth and darkneſs that we do not enjoy more *viſits* of this grace; and that the dawnings of glory do not more ſhine on our ſouls. Such things as theſe may excite us to diligence in the duty propoſed unto us.

And I ſhall here inquire, (1.) *What* is that *glory of Chriſt*, which we do, or may *behold* by faith? (2.) *How* do we *behold* it? (3.) *Wherein* our doing ſo differs from immediate viſion in heaven. And in the whole we ſhall endeavour an anſwer unto the inquiry made unto the ſpouſe, by the daughters of Jeruſalem, Cant. v. 9. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?*

CHAP. II.

The glory of the perſon of Chriſt, as the only repreſentative of God unto the church.

THE *glory of Chriſt* is the glory of the perſon of Chriſt. So he calls it, John xvii. 22. *That glory which is mine*, belongeth to me, unto my perſon.

The perſon of Chriſt may be conſidered two ways: (1.) *Abſolutely* in itſelf. (2.) In the *ſuſception* and diſcharge of his office, with what enſued thereon. His glory on theſe diſtinct accounts, is diſtinct and different; but all equally *his own.*

How in both reſpects we may *behold* it by faith is that which we inquire into.

The firſt thing wherein we may behold the glory of the *perſon of Chriſt*, God and man, which was given him of his Father, conſiſts in the *repreſentation* of the nature of God, and of the divine perſon of the *Father*, unto the church in him; *for we behold the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Otherwiſe we know it not, we ſee it not, we ſee nothing of it; that is the way of *ſeeing* and *knowing* God, declared in the ſcripture as our duty and bleſſedneſs. The glory of God comprehends both the holy properties of his nature, and the counſels of his will; and the *light of the knowledge of theſe things*, we have only in the *face* or perſon of Jeſus Chriſt. Whatever obſcure imperfect notions we may have of them otherwiſe, we cannot have the light of the illuminating, irradiating knowledge of the glory of God, which may enlighten our minds, and ſanctify our hearts, but only *in the face* or perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*; for he is the *image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the *expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3. the *image of the inviſible God*, Col. i. 15. I do here only mention theſe things, becauſe I have handled them at large in my diſcourſe of the *Myſtery* of *godlineſs*, or the *perſon of Chriſt*; whereunto I refer the readers for their full declaration and vindication *. Herein is he glorious, in that he is the great *repreſentative* of the nature of God and his will unto us, which without him would have been eternally hid from us, or been inviſible unto us; we ſhould never have *ſeen* God at any time, here nor hereafter, John i. 18.

In his divine perſon abſolutely conſidered, he is the eſſential image of God, even the Father: *He is in the Father*, and the Father in him, in the unity of the ſame divine eſſence, John xiv. 10. Now he is *with the Father*, John i. 1. in the diſtinction of his perſon, ſo is he his eſſential image, Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. In his incarnation, he becomes the repreſentative image of God unto the church, 2 Cor. iv. 6. without whom our underſtandings can make no ſuch approach unto the divine excellencies, but that God continues to be *unto us*, what he is in *himſelf*, *the inviſible God*. In the face of Jeſus Chriſt we ſee his glory.

This is the *original glory of Chriſt given him by his Father*, and which by faith we may behold. He, and he alone declares, repreſents, and makes known unto angels and men, the *eſſential glory* of the inviſible God, his attributes and his

* Which ſhews the propriety of printing both treatiſes together.

will, without which, a perpetual comparative darkneſs would have been on the whole creation, eſpecially that part of it here below. This is the foundation of our religion, the *rock whereon the church is built*, the ground of all our hopes of ſalvation, of life and immortality. All is reſolved into this, namely, the *repreſentation* that is made of the nature and will of God in the perſon and office of Chriſt: if this fail us, we are loſt for ever; if this rock ſtand firm, the church is ſafe here, and ſhall be triumphant hereafter.

Herein then is the Lord Chriſt exceedingly glorious. Thoſe who cannot *behold this glory of his by faith*, namely, as he is the great divine ordinance to *repreſent* God unto us, they know him not. In their worſhip of him, they worſhip but an image of their own deviſing.

Yea, in the ignorance and neglect hereof, conſiſts the *formal nature of unbelief*, even that which is inevitably ruinous unto the ſouls of men. He that diſcerns not the *repreſentation of the glory of God* in the perſon of Chriſt unto the ſouls of men, is an unbeliever. Such was the ſtate of the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles of old; they did not, they would not, they could not behold the glory of God in him, nor how he did repreſent him. That this was both the cauſe, and the *formal nature* of their unbelief, the apoſtle declares at large, 1 Cor. i. 21. *For after that, in the wiſdom of God, the world by wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe.* ver. 22. *For the Jews require a ſign, and the Greeks ſeek after wiſdom:* ver. 23. *But we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and unto the Greeks fooliſhneſs;* ver. 24. *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the power of God and the wiſdom of God.* ver. 25. *Becauſe the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men; and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than men.* Not to ſee the wiſdom of God, and the power of God, and conſequently all the other holy properties of his nature in Chriſt, is to be an unbeliever.

The eſſence of faith conſiſts in a due aſcription of glory to God, Rom. iv. 20. This we cannot attain unto, without the manifeſtation of thoſe *divine excellencies* unto us, wherein he is glorious. This is done in Chriſt alone, ſo as that we may glorify God in a ſaving and acceptable manner. He who diſcerns not the glory of divine wiſdom, power, goodneſs, love, and grace, in the perſon and office of Chriſt, with the way of the ſalvation of ſinners by him, is an unbeliever.

Hence the great deſign of the devil in the beginning of the preaching of the goſpel, was to *blind the eyes of men*, and fill

their minds with prejudices, that they *might not behold* this glory of his; ſo the apoſtle gives an account of his ſucceſs in this deſign, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *If our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* By various ways and methods of deceit, to ſecure the reputation he had got, of being *god of this world*, by pretences and appearances of ſupernatural power and wiſdom, he laboured to blind the eyes of men with prejudices againſt that *glorious light of the goſpel*, which propoſed the Lord Chriſt as the only *image of God*. This blindneſs, this darkneſs is cured in them that believe, by the mighty power of God; for *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath irradiated our hearts with the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. wherein true ſaving faith doth conſiſt. Under this *darkneſs* periſhed the unbelieving world of Jews and Gentiles; and ſuch is the preſent condition of all by whom the divine perſon of Chriſt is denied; for no mere creature can ever make a perfect repreſentation of God unto us. But we muſt a little further inquire into this myſtery.

Since men fell from God by ſin, it is no ſmall part of their miſery and puniſhment, that they are covered with *thick darkneſs and ignorance* of the nature of God. They know him not, they have not ſeen him at any time. Hence is that promiſe to the church in Chriſt, Iſa. lx. 2. *For behold, the darkneſs ſhall cover the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee.*

The ancient philoſophers made great inquiries into, and obtained many notions of the divine *Being*, its exiſtence and excellencies. And theſe notions they adorned with great elegancy of ſpeech, to allure others unto the admiration of them. Hereon they boaſted themſelves to be the only *wiſe men* in the world, Rom. i. 22. they *boaſted* that they were the wiſe. But we muſt abide in the judgment of the apoſtles concerning them in their inquiries: he aſſures us, that the *world in its wiſdom*, that is, theſe wiſe men in it, by their wiſdom *knew not God*, 1 Cor. i. 21. And he calls the authors of their beſt notions *Atheiſts*, or *men without God in the world*, Eph. ii. 12. For,

1. They had no certain guide, rule, nor light, which being attended unto, might lead them infallibly into the knowledge of the divine nature. All they had of this kind was their own *reaſonings* or imaginations, whereby they commenced *the great*

diſputers of the world; but in them they *waxed vain, and their fooliſh heart was darkened*, Rom. i. 21. They did at beſt but endeavour *to feel after God*, as men do in the dark, after what they cannot clearly diſcern, Acts xvii. 27. Among others, Cicero's book *de natura deorum*, gives us an exact account of the intention of the apoſtle in that expreſſion. And it is at this day not want of wit, but hatred of the myſteries of our religion, which makes ſo many prone to forego all *ſupernatural religion*, and to betake themſelves unto a religion declared, as they ſuppoſe, by reaſon and the light of nature; like bats and owls, who being not able to bear the light of the ſun, betake themſelves unto the twilight, to the dawnings of light and darkneſs.

2. Whatever they did attain, as unto *rational notions* about things inviſible and incomprehenſible, yet could they never deliver themſelves from ſuch principles and practices in idolatry, and all manner of flagitious ſins, as that they could be of any benefit unto them. This is ſo effectually demonſtrated by the apoſtle, in the *firſt chapter of the epiſtle to the Romans*, as that we need not to inſiſt upon it. Men may talk what they pleaſe of a *light within them*, or of the power of reaſon to conduct them unto that knowledge of God, whereby they may live unto him: but if they had nothing elſe, if they did not boaſt *themſelves* of that light which hath its foundation and original in divine revelation alone, they would not excel them, who in the beſt management of their own reaſonings, *knew not God*, but waxed vain in their imaginations.

With reſpect unto this *univerſal darkneſs*, that is, ignorance of God, with horrid confuſion accompanying it in the minds of men, Chriſt is called, and is the *light of men*, the *light of the world*, becauſe in and by him alone this darkneſs is diſpelled, as he is the *Sun of righteouſneſs*.

3. This darkneſs in the minds of men, this ignorance of God, his nature and his will, was the *original of all evil* unto the world, and yet continues ſo to be. For,

(1.) Hereon did Satan erect his kingdom and throne, obtaining in his deſign until he bare himſelf as *the god of this world*, and was ſo eſteemed by the moſt. He exalted himſelf by virtue of this *darkneſs* (as he is *the prince of darkneſs*), into the place and room of God, as the object of the religious worſhip of men. For the things which the *Gentiles ſacrificed, they ſacrificed unto devils, and not to God*, 1 Cor. x. 21. Lev. xvii. 7. This is the territory of Satan; yea, the power and ſceptre of his kingdom in the minds of the *children of diſobe-*

dience. Hereby he maintains his dominion unto this day in many and great nations, and with individual perſons innumerable.

(2.) This is the ſpring of all wickedneſs and confuſion among men themſelves. Hence aroſe that flood of abominations in the *old world*, which God took away with a *flood of deſolation*: hence were the ſins of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, which he revenged with *fire from heaven.* In brief: all the rage, blood, confuſion, deſolations, cruelties, oppreſſions, villanies, which the world hath been, and is filled withal, whereby the ſouls of men have been, and are *flooded* into eternal deſtruction, have all riſen from this corrupt fountain of the ignorance of God.

(3.) Of ſuch as thoſe deſcribed, we are the *poſterity* and off-ſpring. Our fore-fathers in this nation, were given up unto as brutiſh a *ſervice of the devil*, as any nation under the ſun. It is therefore an effect of infinite mercy, that the day hath dawned on us, poor Gentiles, and that the *day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us.* The glory of this grace is expreſſed, Eph. iii. 5. *Which in other ages was not made known unto the ſons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apoſtles and prophets by the Spirit*; ver. 6. *That the Gentiles ſhould be fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body, and partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt, by the goſpel*: ver. 7. *Whereof I was made a miniſter, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.* ver. 8. *Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt*; ver. 9. *And to make all men ſee, what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt*: ver. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.* God might have left us to periſh in the blindneſs and ignorance of our forefathers; but of his own accord, and by his own powerful grace alone, he hath *tranſlated us out of darkneſs into his marvellous light.* But alas! the horrible ingratitude of men, for the glorious light of the goſpel, and the abuſe of it, will iſſue in a ſore revenge.

God was known under the Old Teſtament, by *the revelation of his word*, and the inſtitution of his worſhip. This was the glory and privilege of Iſrael, as the pſalmiſt declares, Pſal. cxlvii. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgments unto Iſrael: he hath not dealt ſo with any nation.* The church then *knew him*, yet ſo as that they had an appre-

henſion that he dwelt in *thick darkneſs*, where they could not have any clear views of him, Exod. xx. 21. Deut. v. 22. 1 Kings viii. 12. 2 Chron. vi. 1. And the reaſon why God ſo repreſented himſelf in *darkneſs* unto them, was to inſtruct them in their imperfect ſtate, wherein they could not comprehend that glory which ſhould afterwards be revealed. For as he is now made known in Chriſt, we ſee that *he is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all.*

4. Hitherto darkneſs in general covered the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people, as unto the knowledge of God; only there was a twilight in the church. The day did not yet dawn, the *ſhadows did not flee away*, nor the *Day ſtar ſhine* in the hearts of men. But when the *Sun of righteouſneſs* did ariſe in his ſtrength and beauty, when the Son of God *appeared in the fleſh*, and in the diſcharge of his office; God himſelf, as unto his being, and manner of exiſtence in *three diſtinct perſons*, with all the glorious properties of the divine nature, were illuſtriouſly manifeſted unto them that did believe, and the light of the knowledge of them diſpelled all the *ſhadows* that were in the church, and ſhone into the *darkneſs* which was in the world, ſo as that none continued ignorant of God, but thoſe who would not ſee; John i. 5. *And the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not.* ver. 14. *And the Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.* verſe 17. *For the law was given by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* ver. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

Herein is the Lord Chriſt glorious. And this is that which I ſhall now ſpeak unto; namely, *How we may behold the glory of Chriſt* in the repreſentation and revelation that is made of God and his glory, in his perſon and office, unto all that do believe. For it is not ſo much the declaration of the nature of the things themſelves, wherein the glory of Chriſt doth conſiſt, as our *way* and *duty*, in the *beholding of them*, which at preſent is deſigned.

He calls unto us, ſaying, *Behold me, look unto me, and be ſaved*, Iſa. xlv. 22. What is it that we ſee in Chriſt? what do we behold in him? He aſketh that queſtion concerning his church, *What will ſee in the Shulamite?* Whereunto he an-

ſwers, *As it were in the company of two armies*, Cant. vi. 13. or the two churches of the Old and New Teſtament, in order and beauty. We may inquire, what ſhall we, what do we ſee in him? Do we ſee him as the *image of the inviſible God*, repreſenting him, his nature, properties, and will unto us? Do we ſee him as the *character*, the *expreſs image of the perſon of the Father*, ſo as that we have no need of Philip's requeſt, *Lord ſhew us the Father*, becauſe having ſeen him, *we have ſeen the Father alſo?* John xiv. 9.

This is our firſt ſaving view of Chriſt, the firſt inſtance of our *beholding his glory by faith*. So to ſee him, as to ſee God in him, is to behold his glory; for herein is he eternally glorious. And this is that glory whoſe view we ought to long for, and labour after. And if we ſee it not, we are yet in darkneſs; yea, though we ſay we ſee, we are blind like others. So David longed and prayed for it, when yet he could behold it only in types and ſhadows, Pſal. lxiii. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee: my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee; to ſee thy power and thy glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary.* For there was in the ſanctuary an obſcure repreſentation of the glory of God in Chriſt. How much more ſhould we prize that view of it, which we may have with open face, though yet *as in a glaſs?* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Moſes when he had ſeen the works of God, which were great and marvellous, yet found not himſelf ſatisfied therewith: wherefore after all, he prays that God *would ſhew him his glory*, Exod. xxxiii. 18. He knew that the ultimate reſt, bleſſedneſs and ſatisfaction of the ſoul, is not in ſeeing the *works* of God, but the *glory of God* himſelf. Therefore did he deſire ſome immediate dawnings of it upon him in this world. *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory.* And if we have right apprehenſions of the future ſtate of bleſſedneſs, we cannot but have the ſame deſire of ſeeing *more of his glory* in this life. But the queſtion is, how we may attain it? If we are left unto ourſelves in this inquiry, if we have no other way for it, but the immediate fixing of our thoughts on the immenſity of the divine nature, we muſt come every one to the concluſion that Agur makes on the like conſideration; *Surely I am more bruti ſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man. I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath aſcended up into heaven, or deſcended? who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his ſon's name, if thou canſt tell?* Prov. xxx. 2, 3, 4.

It is in Chriſt alone, that we may have a clear diſtinct view of the glory of God and his excellencies: for him, and him *alone* hath he appointed the repreſentative of himſelf unto us: John i. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Chap. xiv. 7. *If ye had known me, ye ſhould have known my Father alſo: and from henceforth ye know him, and have ſeen him.* ver. 8. *Philip ſaith unto him, Lord, ſhew us the Father, and it ſufficeth us.* ver. 9. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip? He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father; and how ſayeſt thou then, Shew us the Father?* ver. 10. *Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I ſpeak unto you, I ſpeak not of myſelf: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.* 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God who hath commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Col. i. 15. *Who is the image of the inviſible God.* Eph. iii. 4. *Whereby when ye read ye may underſtand my knowledge in the myſtery of Chriſt,* ver. 5. *Which in other ages was not made known unto the ſons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apoſtles and prophets by the Spirit;* ver. 6. *That the Gentiles ſhould be fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body, and partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt, by the goſpel:* ver. 7. *Whereof I was made a miniſter, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.* ver. 8. *Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt;* ver. 9. *And to make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt:* ver. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.* Heb. i. 2. *God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds.* And we ſhall take an account hereof in one or two eſpecial inſtances.

1. *Infinite wiſdom* is one of the moſt glorious properties of the divine nature; it is that which is directive of all the external works of God, wherein the glory of all the other excellencies of God is manifeſted: wherefore the manifeſtation of the whole glory of God proceeds originally from *infinite wiſdom.* But as Job ſpeaks, *Where ſhall this wiſdom be found? and what is the place of underſtanding?* chap. xxviii. 12. *Can we by ſearching find out God? can we find out the Almighty to perfec-*

tion? chap. xi. 7. As it is in itſelf an eſſential, eternal property of the divine nature, we can have no comprehenſion of it; we can but adore it in that infinite diſtance wherein we ſtand from God: but in its operations and effects it may be diſcerned; for they are deſigned of God for its manifeſtation. Among theſe the beſt is the contrivance of the work of the ſalvation of the church; ſo it is celebrated by the apoſtle, Eph. iii. 9, 10. *To make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt: to the intent that now unto the principalites and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.*

If we have any intereſt in God, if we have any hopes of bleſſedneſs in *beholding of his glory* unto eternity, we cannot but deſire a view (ſuch as is attainable) of this infinite *manifold wiſdom of God* in this life. But it is in Chriſt alone that we can diſcern any thing of it; for him hath the Father choſen and ſealed to repreſent it unto us. *All the treaſures of this wiſdom are hid,* laid up, and laid out *in him.* Herein lies the eſſence and form of faith. Believers by it do ſee the wiſdom of God in Chriſt, in his perſon and office, *Chriſt the wiſdom of God;* unbelievers ſee it not, as the apoſtle argues, 1 Cor. i. 22. *For the Jews require a ſign, and the Greeks ſeek after wiſdom:* ver. 23. *But we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling block, and unto the Greeks fooliſhneſs;* ver. 24. *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the power of God and the wiſdom of God.*

In beholding the glory of this infinite wiſdom of God in Chriſt, we *behold his own glory* alſo; the glory given him of his Father; for this is his glory, that in and by him, and him alone, the wiſdom of God is manifeſted and repreſented unto us. When God appointed him as the great and only means of this end, *he gave him honour and glory* above the whole creation; for it is but little of divine wiſdom which the works of it declare, in compariſon of what is manifeſted in Chriſt Jeſus. We no way deny or extenuate the manifeſtation that is made of the *wiſdom of God* in the works of creation and providence. It is ſufficient to detect the folly of Atheiſm and idolatry, and was deſigned of God unto that end. But its *comparative inſufficiency,* with reſpect unto the repreſentation of it in Chriſt, as unto the ends of knowing God aright, and living unto him, the ſcripture doth abundantly atteſt. And the abuſe of it was *Catholic,* as the apoſtle declares, Rom. i. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are*

clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; ſo that they are without excuſe, &c. To ſee this wiſdom clearly is our wiſdom; and a due apprehenſion of it, fills the ſouls of believers with *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.*

2. We may alſo inſtance in the *love of God.* The apoſtle tells us, that *God is love,* 1 John iv. 8. Divine love is not to be conſidered only in its effects, but in its nature and eſſence; and ſo it is *God himſelf; for God is love.* And a bleſſed revelation this is of the divine nature: it caſts out envy, hatred, malice, revenge, with all their fruits, in rage, fierceneſs, implacability, perſecution, murder, into the territories of Satan. They belong not unto God in his nature or actings; for *God is love.* So the ſame apoſtle tells us, that he who *ſlew his brother, was of the wicked one,* 1 John iii. 12. He was of the devil his father, and his works did he do.

But the inquiry is as before; How ſhall we have a view of this *love,* of God as love? By what way or means ſhall we behold the glory of it? It is hidden from all living, in God himſelf. The wiſe philoſophers, who diſcourſed ſo much of the *love of God,* knew nothing of this, that *God is love.* The *moſt* of the natural notions of men about it are *corrupt,* and the *beſt* of them *weak* and imperfect. Generally the thoughts of men about it, are, that he is of a facile and eaſy nature, one that they may make bold withal in all their occaſions, as the pſalmiſt declares, Pſal. l. 21. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thyſelf: but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes.* And whereas it muſt be learned in its effects, operations, and divine ways of its manifeſtation, thoſe who know not Chriſt, know nothing of them. And many things in providence do interpoſe to hinder our view of this love; for although that indeed *God is love,* yet *his wrath is revealed from heaven againſt the ungodlineſs of men:* as all things at this day are filled with evidences of his anger and diſpleaſure. How then ſhall we know, wherein ſhall we behold the glory of God in this, that he is *love?* The apoſtle declares it in the next words, 1 John iv. 9. *Herein was manifeſt the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* This is the only evidence given us that *God is love.* Hereby alone is the divine nature as *ſuch* made known unto us; namely, in the miſſion, perſon, and office of the Son of God; without this all is in darkneſs as unto the true nature and ſupreme operation of this divine love.

Herein do we behold the glory of Chriſt himſelf, even in this life. This glory was given him of the Father; namely, that he now ſhould declare and evidence that *God is love;* and he did ſo, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.* Herein we may ſee how excellent, how beautiful, how glorious and deſirable he is, ſeeing in him alone we have a due repreſentation of God *as he is love*, which is the moſt joyful ſight of God that any creature can obtain. He who beholds not the glory of Chriſt herein, is utterly ignorant of thoſe heavenly myſteries; he knoweth neither God nor Chriſt; he hath neither the Father nor the Son. He knows not God, becauſe he knows not the holy properties of his nature in the principal way deſigned by infinite wiſdom for their manifeſtation; he knows not Chriſt, becauſe he ſees not the glory of God in him. Wherefore, whatever notions men have from the light of nature, or from the works of providence, that there is *love in God*, however they may adorn them in elegant affecting expreſſions; yet from them no man can know that *God is love;* in the revelation hereof Chriſt hath the pre-eminence; nor can any man comprehend any thing of it aright but in him. It is that which the whole light of the creation cannot diſcover; for it is the ſpring and centre of the myſtery of godlineſs.

Theſe things are of the *deep things of God*, ſuch as belong unto that *wiſdom of God in a myſtery*, which they that are carnal cannot receive, as the apoſtle teſtifies, 1 Cor. ii. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* But the meaneſt believer who lives in the exerciſe of faith, may have an underſtanding of them ſo far as is needful unto his love and obedience. The ſum of the whole is this: If you would behold the glory of Chriſt, as the great means of your ſanctification and conſolation, as the only preparation for the beholding of his glory in eternal bleſſedneſs; conſider what of God is made known and *repreſented* unto you in him, wherein God purpoſed and deſigned to glorify himſelf in him: now this is all that may be known of God in a ſaving manner; eſpecially his *wiſdom*, his *love*, his goodneſs, grace, and mercy, whereon the life of our ſouls doth depend; and the Lord Chriſt being appointed the only way and means hereof, how exceeding glorious muſt he be in the eyes of them that do believe!

Theſe things being premiſed, I ſhall cloſe this firſt conſideration of that *glory of Chriſt which we behold by faith in this*

world, with ſome ſuch obſervations, as may excite us unto the practice of this great duty, and improvement of this great privilege; the greateſt which on this ſide heaven we can be made partakers of.

There are ſome who regard not theſe things at all, but rather deſpiſe them. They never entertain any ſerious thoughts of obtaining a view of the glory of God in Chriſt, which is to be unbelievers. They look on him as a teacher that came forth from God to reveal his will, and to teach us his worſhip; and ſo indeed he was: but this they ſay was the *ſole uſe of his perſon in religion,* which is Mahometiſm. The manifeſtation of all the holy properties of the divine nature, with the repreſentation of them unto angels above, and the church in this world, as he is the *image of the inviſible God,* in the conſtitution of his perſon, and the diſcharge of his office, are things they regard not; yea, they deſpiſe and ſcorn what is profeſſed concerning them; for pride and contempt of others were always the ſafeſt covert of ignorance; otherwiſe it would ſeem ſtrange, that men ſhould openly boaſt of their own blindneſs. But theſe conceptions of mens minds are influenced by that unbelief of his divine perſon, which maketh havock of Chriſtianity at this day in the world.

I ſpeak of them, whoſe minds are better diſpoſed towards heavenly things; and unto them I ſay, *Wherefore do you love Jeſus Chriſt?* for ſo you profeſs to do. Wherefore do you truſt in him? wherefore do you honour him? wherefore do you deſire to be in heaven with him? Can you give a *reaſon of this hope* that is in you? an account why you do all or any of theſe things? If you cannot, all that you pretend towards him, is but fancy and imagination; you *fight uncertainly as men beating the air.* Or is one of your reaſons hereof, that in him you *do by faith behold that glory of God,* with the holy properties of his nature, and their principal operations, in order unto your own ſalvation and bleſſedneſs, which otherwiſe would have been eternally hid from you? Hereon is he *precious unto them that do believe.*

Let us therefore, as many as *are ſpiritual, be thus minded.* Let us make uſe of this *privilege* with rejoicing, and be found in the diſcharge of this *duty* with diligence: for thus to *behold the glory of Chriſt* is both our privilege and our duty. The duties of the law were a burden and a yoke; but thoſe of the goſpel are privileges and advantages.

It is a promiſe concerning the days of the New Teſtament, that our *eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty,* Iſa. xxxiii. 17.; we

ſhall behold the glory of Chriſt in its luſtre and excellency. What is this *beauty* of the King of ſaints? Is it not that God is in him, and he is the great repreſentative of his glory unto us? Wherefore, in the contemplation of this glory conſiſts the principal exerciſe of faith: and who can declare the glory of this privilege, that we who are born in darkneſs, and deſerved to be caſt out into utter darkneſs, ſhould be *tranſlated into this marvellous light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt?*

What are the ſtained glories, the fading beauties of this world? of all that the devil ſhewed our Saviour from the mount? what are they in compariſon of one view of the glory of God repreſented in Chriſt, and of the glory of Chriſt as his great repreſentative? The moſt pernicious effect of unbelief under the preaching of the goſpel, is, that together with an influence of power from Satan, *it blinds the eyes of mens minds, that they ſhould not ſee this glory of Chriſt*, whereon they periſh eternally, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

But the moſt of thoſe who at this day are *called Chriſtians*, are ſtrangers unto this duty. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt told the Phariſees, that notwithſtanding all their boaſting of the knowledge of God, they had not *heard his voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape;* that is, as Moſes did. They had no real acquaintance with him, they had no ſpiritual view of his glory. And ſo is it amongſt ourſelves; notwithſtanding the general profeſſion that is of the knowledge of Chriſt, they are but few who thus behold his glory; and therefore few who are tranſformed into his image and likeneſs.

Some men ſpeak much of the *imitation of Chriſt*, and *following of his example;* and it were well if we could ſee more of it really in effect. But no man ſhall ever become *like unto him*, by bare *imitation* of his actions, without that view or intuition of his glory which alone is accompanied with a transforming power to *change them into the ſame image.*

The truth is, the beſt of us all are wofully defective in this duty, and many are diſcouraged from it, becauſe a pretence of it in ſome hath degenerated into ſuperſtition: but we are loth at any time ſeriouſly to engage in it, and come with an unwillingneſs, unto the exerciſe of our minds in it.

Thoughts of this *glory of Chriſt* are too *high* for us, or too *hard* for us, ſuch as we cannot long delight in; we turn away from them with a kind of wearineſs; yet are they of the ſame nature in general with our beholding of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, wherein there ſhall be no wearineſs or ſatiety unto

eternity. Is not the cauſe of it, that we are unſpiritual or carnal, having our thoughts and affections wonted to give entertainment unto other things? For this is the principal cauſe of our unreadineſs and incapacity to exerciſe our minds in and about the great myſteries of the goſpel, 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2, 3. *And I, brethren, could not ſpeak unto you as unto ſpiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Chriſt. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* And it is ſo with us moreover, becauſe we do not ſtir up ourſelves with watchfulneſs and diligence in continual actings of faith on this bleſſed object. This is that which keeps many of us at ſo low an ebb, as unto the powers of an heavenly life, and ſpiritual joys. Did we abound in this duty, in this exerciſe of faith, our life in walking before God would be more ſweet and pleaſant unto us; our ſpiritual light and ſtrength would have a daily increaſe; we ſhould more repreſent the glory of Chriſt in our ways and walking, than uſually we do; and death itſelf would be moſt welcome unto us.

The *angels* themſelves *deſire to look* into the things of the glory of Chriſt, 1 Pet. i. 10. *Of which ſalvation the prophets have inquired, and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the grace that ſhould come unto you.* ver. 12. *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into.* There is in them matter of inquiry and inſtruction for the moſt high and holy ſpirits in heaven. The manifold wiſdom of God in them is made known unto *principalities and powers in heavenly places by the church,* Eph. iii. 10. And ſhall we neglect that which is the object of angelical diligence to inquire into; eſpecially conſidering that we are not more than they concerned in it?

Is Chriſt then thus glorious in our eyes? Do we *ſee the Father in him,* or by ſeeing of him? Do we ſedulouſly, daily contemplate on the wiſdom, love, grace, goodneſs, holineſs, and righteouſneſs of God, as revealing and manifeſting themſelves in him? Do we ſufficiently conſider that the immediate viſion of this glory in heaven will be our everlaſting bleſſedneſs? Doth the *imperfect view* which we have of it here, increaſe our deſires after the *perfect ſight* of it above? With reſpect unto theſe inquiries, I ſhall briefly ſpeak unto ſundry ſorts of men.

Some will ſay they underſtand not theſe things nor any

concernment of their own in them. If they are true, yet are they *notions* which they may ſafely be without the knowledge of; for ſo far as they can diſcern, they have no influence on Chriſtian practice, or duties of morality. And the preaching of them doth but take off the minds of men from more neceſſary duties. But *if the goſpel be hid, it is hid unto them that periſh.* And unto the objection I ſay,

1. Nothing is more fully and clearly revealed in the goſpel, than that unto us Jeſus Chriſt is the *image of the inviſible God*, that he is the *character of the perſon of the Father*, ſo as that in *ſeeing him*, we ſee the Father alſo; that we have the *light of the knowledge of the glory of God in his face alone*, as hath been proved. This is the principal fundamental myſtery and truth of the goſpel; and which if it be not received, believed, owned, all other truths are uſeleſs unto our ſouls. To refer all the teſtimonies that are given hereunto, to the doctrine which he taught, in contradiſtinction unto his perſon, as acting in the diſcharge of his office, is *anti-evangelical, anti-chriſtian*, turning the whole goſpel into a fable.

2. It is ſo, that the *light of faith* is given unto us principally to enable us to *behold the glory of God in Chriſt*; to contemplate on it, as unto all the ends of its manifeſtation. So is it expreſsly affirmed, 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* If we have not this light, as it is communicated by the power of God unto them that do believe, Eph. i. 17, 18, 19; we muſt be ſtrangers unto the whole myſtery of the goſpel. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

3. That in the *beholding of the glory of God in Chriſt*, we behold his glory alſo. For herein is he infinitely glorious above the whole creation, in that in and by him alone the glory of the inviſible God is repreſented unto us. Herein do our ſouls live. This is that whereby the image of God is renewed in us, and we are made like unto the Firſt-born.

4. This is ſo far from being unneceſſary unto *Chriſtian practice, and the ſanctified duties of morality*, that he knows not Chriſt, he knows not the goſpel, he knows not the faith of the Catholic church, who imagines that they can be performed acceptably without it. Yea, this is the root whence all other *Chriſtian duties* do ſpring, and whereon they grow, whereby they are diſtinguiſhed from the works of Heathens. He is no Chriſtian who believes not that faith in the perſon of Chriſt is the ſpring of all evangelical obedience; or who knows not

that this faith reſpects the revelation of the glory of God in him.

If theſe things are ſo, as they are the moſt important truths of the goſpel, and whoſe denial overthrows the foundation of faith, and is ruinous to Chriſtian religion; certainly it is our duty to live in the conſtant exerciſe of faith with reſpect unto this glory of Chriſt. And we have ſufficient experience of what kind of morality the ignorance of it hath produced. Others there are who may be ſome way *ſtrangers*, but are no way *enemies* unto this myſtery, and to the practical exerciſe of faith therein; unto ſuch I ſhall tender the enſuing directions:

1. Reckon in your minds, that this *beholding of the glory of Chriſt*, by beholding the glory of God, and all his holy properties in him, is the greateſt *privilege* whereof in this life we can be made partakers. The dawning of heaven is in it, and the *firſt-fruits of glory*; for this is *life eternal* to know the Father, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, John xvii. 3. Unleſs you value it, unleſs you eſteem it as ſuch a *privilege*, you will not enjoy it; and that which is not valued according unto its worth, is deſpiſed. It is not enough to think it a *privilege*, an *advantage*; but it is to be *valued* above other things according unto its *greatneſs* and excellency. *Deſtruction and death ſay, We have heard the fame of it with our ears*, Job xxviii. 22. And if we do *no more*, we ſhall die ſtrangers unto it: we are to *cry after this knowledge, and lift up our voice for this underſtanding*, if we deſign to attain it.

2. As it is a great *privilege*, which requires a due valuation; ſo it is a great *myſtery*, which requires much ſpiritual wiſdom to the right underſtanding of it, and to direct in its practice, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. *And my ſpeech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wiſdom, but in demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power: that your faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God.* Fleſh and blood will not reveal it unto us, but we muſt be taught of God to apprehend it, John i. 12, 13. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Matth. xvi. 16, 17. *And Simon Peter anſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* Mere unſanctified reaſon will never enable us unto, nor guide us in the diſcovery of this duty. Men are not ſo vain as to hope for ſkill and underſtanding in the myſtery of a ſe-

cular art or trade, without the diligent uſe of thoſe means whereby it may be attained; and ſhall we ſuppoſe that we may be furniſhed with ſpiritual ſkill and wiſdom in this ſacred myſtery, without diligence in the uſe of the means appointed of God for the attaining of it? The principal of them is *fervent prayer*. Pray then with Moſes, that God would *ſhew you this his glory*; pray with the apoſtle, that *the eyes of your underſtandings may be enlightened to behold it*; pray that the *God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of him*. Fill your minds with ſpiritual thoughts and contrivances about them. Slothful and lazy ſouls never obtain one view of this glory; the *lion in the way* deters them from attempting it. Being carnal, they abhor all diligence in the uſe of ſpiritual means, ſuch as prayer and meditation on things unto them uneaſy, unpleaſing, and difficult. Unto others the way partakes of the nature of the end; the means of obtaining a view of the glory of Chriſt are of the ſame kind, of the ſame pleaſantneſs, with that view itſelf, in their proportion.

3. Learn the uſe hereof from the actings of *contrary vicious habits*. When the minds of men are vehemently fixed on the purſuit of their luſts, they will be continually ruminating on the objects of them, and have a thouſand contrivances about them, until their *eyes become full of an adultreſs, and they cannot ceaſe from ſinning*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks. The objects of their luſts have framed and raiſed an image of themſelves in their minds, and transformed them into their own likeneſs. Is this the way of them who *go down to the chambers of death?* do they thus frame their ſouls, and make them meet for deſtruction, until their words, geſtures, actions, proclaim the frame of their minds unto all that look upon them? and ſhall we be ſlothful and negligent in the contemplation of that glory which transforms our minds into its own likeneſs, ſo as that the eyes of our underſtandings ſhall be continually filled with it, until we ſee him and behold him continually, ſo as never to ceaſe from the holy acts of delight in him, and love unto him?

4. Would we then *behold the glory of God*, as he manifeſteth it in and by the holy properties of his nature, with their bleſſed operations and effects, without which we have nothing of the power of religion in us, whatever we pretend? this alone is the way of it. Go to the whole creation and all things contained in it; they can ſay no more, but *we have heard the fame and report of theſe things*, and what we have heard we declare; but it is but a *little portion* of them that we are acquainted

withal. *The heavens* indeed *declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work. The inviſible things of God are underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* But comparatively, it is but *little* that we can hence learn of theſe things, as unto what we may behold of them in Chriſt Jeſus. How blind herein was the beſt *philoſopher* in compariſon of the meaneſt of the *apoſtles*, yea, of him who is leaſt in the kingdom of *heaven?*

But herein it is required, that we reſt not in the *notions of this truth*, and a bare aſſent unto the doctrine of it. The affecting power of it upon our hearts, is that which we ſhould aim at. Wherein doth the bleſſedneſs of the ſaints above conſiſt? is it not herein, that they behold and ſee the glory of God in Chriſt? And what is the effect of it upon thoſe bleſſed ſouls? doth it not change them into the ſame image, or make them like unto Chriſt? doth it not fill and ſatiate them with joy, reſt, delight, complacency, and ineffable ſatisfaction? Do we expect, do we deſire the ſame ſtate of bleſſedneſs? It is our *preſent view* of the glory of Chriſt which is our *imitation* thereinto, if we are exerciſed in it, until we have an experience of its *transforming power* in our ſouls.

Theſe things are, it may be, of little uſe unto ſome. Such as are babes in ſpiritual knowledge and underſtanding, either becauſe they are *carnal*, 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2. or *ſlothful in hearing*, Heb. v. 11.—14. are not capable of theſe divine myſteries. And therefore the apoſtle did in an eſpecial manner declare this wiſdom of God in a myſtery unto them that were *perfect*, 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7; that is, who were more grown in *ſpiritual knowledge, and had their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern good and evil.* It is unto them who are exerciſed in the contemplation of inviſible things, who delight to walk in the more retired patns of faith and love, to whom they are precious.

Some few inferences from the whole of what hath been declared ſhall put a cloſe to this part of our diſcourſe.

1. The holy properties of the divine nature are not only repreſented unto our faith in Chriſt as unto their own eſſential glory, but as they are in the exerciſe of their powers for the ſalvation of the church. In him do we behold the wiſdom, goodneſs, love, grace, mercy and power of God acting themſelves in the *contrivance, conſtitution*, and efficacious *accompliſhment* of the great work of our redemption and ſalvation. This gives, as unto us, an unutterable luſtre unto the native amiableneſs of the divine excellencies. The wiſdom and love of God are in themſelves infinitely glorious, infinitely amiable; no-

thing can be added unto them, there can be no increaſe of their eſſential glory. Howbeit, as they are eternally reſident in the divine nature, and abſolutely the ſame with it, we cannot ſo comprehend them, as to have an endearing ſatiating view of their glory: but as they are exerted in the work of the redemption and ſalvation of the church, as they are expreſſed, communicating their bleſſed effects unto the ſouls of them that do believe, which is done only in Chriſt; ſo the beams of their glory ſhine unto us with unſpeakable refreſhment and joy, 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Hence the apoſtle on the conſideration of the actings of the holy properties of God in this bleſſed work, falls into that contemplation: *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out? For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller? Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Rom. xi. 33.—36.

2. *In and through Chriſt we do believe in God,* 1 Pet. i. 21. This is the life of our ſouls. God himſelf in the infinite perfections of his divine nature, is the *ultimate* object of our faith, but he is not here the *immediate* object of it, but the divine way and means of the manifeſtation of himſelf and them unto us, are ſo. *Through Chriſt we believe in God.* By our belief in him, we come to place our faith ultimately in God himſelf; and this we can no otherwiſe do, but by *beholding the glory of God* in him, as hath been declared.

3. This is the only way whereby we may attain the *ſaving, ſanctifying knowledge of God;* without this, every *beam of divine light* that ſhines on us, or gleans from without, (as the *light ſhineth into darkneſs,* when the *darkneſs comprehendeth it not,* John i. 5.); every ſpark that ariſeth from the remainders of the light of nature *within,* do rather amaze the minds of men, than lead them into the ſaving knowledge of God. So a glance of light in a dark night, giving a tranſient view of various objects, and paſſing away, doth rather amaze than direct a traveller, and leave him more expoſed unto wandering than before. Such were all thoſe notions of the divine Being and its excellencies, which thoſe who *boaſted themſelves to be wiſe* among the Heathen embraced and improved. They did but fluctuate in their minds, they did not transform them into

the image and likeneſs of God, as the ſaving knowledge of him doth, Col. iii. 10. *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.*

So the apoſtle expreſſeth this truth; *Where is the wiſe? where is the ſcribe? where is the diſputer of this world? hath not God made fooliſh the wiſdom of this world? For after that, in the wiſdom of God, the world by wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe. For the Jews require a ſign, and the Greeks ſeek after wiſdom: but we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and unto the Greeks fooliſhneſs; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the power of God, and the wiſdom of God,* 1 Cor. i. 20.—24.

After it was evident unto all, that the *world*, the *wiſe*, the ſtudious, the contemplative part of it, in the *wiſdom of God*, diſpoſing them into that condition, wherein they were left unto themſelves, in their own wiſdom, their natural light and reaſon, did not, could not come to the ſaving knowledge of God, but were puffed up into a contempt of the only way of the revelation of himſelf, as weakneſs and folly; it pleaſed God then to manifeſt all their *wiſdom* to be folly; and to eſtabliſh the only means of the knowledge of himſelf in Chriſt Jeſus.

CHAP. III.

The glory of Chriſt, in the myſterious conſtitution of his perſon.

THE ſecond thing wherein we may *behold the glory of Chriſt given him of his Father*, is *in the myſterious conſtitution of his perſon*, as he is God and man in one and the ſame perſon. There are in him, in his one ſingle *individual perſon*, two diſtinct natures; the one eternal, infinite, immenſe, almighty, the form and eſſence of God; the other having a beginning in time, finite, limited, confined unto a certain place, which is our nature, which he took on him when he was *made fleſh, and dwelt among us*. The declaration of the nature of this glory, is a *part of my* DISCOURSE *of the* PERSON *of* CHRIST, whereunto I refer the reader. My preſent deſign is of another nature.

This is that *glory* whoſe beams are ſo illuſtrious, as that the blind world cannot bear the light and beauty of them. Multitudes begin openly to deny this *incarnation of the Son of God*, this *perſonal union* of God and man in their diſtinct natures;

they deny that there is either glory or truth in it: and it will ere long appear, (it begins already to evidence itſelf,) what *greater multitudes* there are, who yet *do not*, who yet *dare not* openly reject the doctrine of it, who in truth believe it not, nor ſee any glory in it. Howbeit, this glory is the glory of our religion, the glory of the church, the ſole rock whereon it is built, the only ſpring of preſent grace and future glory.

This is that glory which the *angels* themſelves deſire to behold, the myſtery whereof they *bow to look into*, 1 Pet. i. 12. So was their deſire repreſented by the *cherubims* in the moſt holy place of the tabernacle; for they were a ſhadow of the miniſtry of angels in the church. The ark and mercy-ſeat were a type of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office; and theſe *cherubims* were made ſtanding over them, as being in heaven above; but earneſtly looking down upon them in a poſture of reverence and adoration. So they did of old, and in their preſent contemplation of it, conſiſts no ſmall part of their eternal bleſſedneſs.

Hereon depends the ruin of Satan and his kingdom. His ſin, ſo far as we can conceive, conſiſted of two parts. (1.) His *pride* againſt the *perſon of the Son of God*, by whom he was created. *For by him were all things created that are* (or were when firſt created) *in heaven, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers*, Col. i. 16. Againſt him he lifted up himſelf, which was the beginning of his tranſgreſſion. (2.) Envy againſt mankind made in the image of God, of the Son of God the firſt-born. This completed his ſin; nothing was now left whereon to act his pride and malice. Unto his eternal confuſion and ruin, God in infinite wiſdom, unites both the natures he had ſinned againſt, in the one perſon of the Son, who was the firſt object of his pride and malice. Hereby his deſtruction is attended with *everlaſting ſhame* in the diſcovery of his folly, wherein he would have contended with infinite wiſdom, as well as miſery, by the powers of the two natures united in one perſon.

Here lies the *foundation* of the church. The foundation of the whole old creation was laid in an act of abſolute ſovereign power. Hereby God *hanged the earth upon nothing*. But the foundation of the church is on this myſterious immoveable rock, *Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God*; on the moſt intimate conjunction of the two natures, the divine and human, in themſelves infinitely diſtant, in the ſame perſon.

We may name one place wherein it is glorioufly repreſented unto us, Iſa. ix. 6. *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is*

given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace. Here muſt the whole church fall down and worſhip the author of this wonderful contrivance, and captivating their underſtandings unto the obedience of faith, humbly adore what they cannot comprehend. This was obſcurely repreſented unto the church of old, Exod. iii. 2.—6. *And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midſt of a buſh: and he looked, and behold, the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed. And Moſes ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt. And when the Lord ſaw that he turned aſide to ſee, God called unto him, out of the midſt of the buſh, and ſaid, Moſes, Moſes. And he ſaid, Here am I. And he ſaid, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy ſhoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy ground. Moreover he ſaid, I am the God of thy fathers,* &c.

This *fire* was a type or declaration of the preſence of God in the perſon of the Son. For with reſpect unto the Father he is called an *Angel*, the Angel of the covenant; but abſolutely in himſelf, he was *Jehovah*, the *God of Abraham*, &c. And of his preſence the *fire* was a proper repreſentation; for in his *nature* he is as a *conſuming fire*; and his preſent work was the delivery of the church out of a *fiery trial*. This *fire* placed itſelf in a *buſh*, where it burned, but the *buſh* was not conſumed. And although the continuance of the *fire* in the *buſh* was but for a ſhort ſeaſon, a preſent appearance; yet thence was God ſaid to *dwell* in the buſh; *The good will of him that dwelt in the buſh*, Deut. xxxiii. 16. And this is ſo ſpoken, becauſe the being of the fire in the buſh for a ſeaſon, was a type of him in whom the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and that for ever, Col. ii. 9.; of him who was *made fleſh, and dwelt among us*, John i. 14. The eternal *fire* of the divine nature dwells in the *buſh* of our frail nature, yet is not conſumed thereby. God thus *dwells in this buſh*, with all his *good-will* towards ſinners.

Moſes looked on this ſight as a marvellous and wondrous thing. And if it were ſo in the *type*, what is it in the *truth*, ſubſtance, and reality of it? And by direction given unto him, to *put off his ſhoes*, we are taught to caſt away all fleſhly *imaginations*, and carnal affections, that by pure acts of faith, we may behold this glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father.

I deſign not here to inſiſt on the explication, or confirmation of this glorious truth, concerning the conſtitution of the

perſon of Chriſt in and by his incarnation. What I can comprehend, what I do believe concerning it, I have fully declared in a large peculiar Treatiſe. Here I take the truth itſelf as known, or as it may be thence learned. My preſent buſineſs is only to ſtir up the minds of believers unto a due *contemplation* of the glory of Chriſt in the ſacred myſterious conſtitution of his perſon, as God and man in one. So much as we abide herein, ſo much do *we live by the faith of the Son of God*; and God can by a ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation open the eyes of our underſtandings, that we may *behold this glory* unto our ineffable conſolation and joy. And unto the diligent diſcharge of our duty herein, I ſhall offer the enſuing directions:

1. Let us get it fixed on our ſouls, and in our minds, that this *glory of Chriſt*, in the divine conſtitution of his perſon, is the beſt, the moſt noble, uſeful, beneficial object, that we can be converſant about in our thoughts, or cleave unto in our affections. What are all other things in compariſon of the *knowledge of Chriſt?* In the judgment of the great apoſtle, they are but *loſs and dung*, Phil. iii. 8, 9, 10. So they were to him, and if they are not ſo to us, we are carnal. What is the world, and what are the things thereof which moſt men ſpend their thoughts about, and fix their affections on? The pſalmiſt gives his judgment about them in compariſon of a view of this glory of Chriſt, Pſal. iv. 6. *Many ſay, Who will ſhew us any good?* who will give and help us to attain ſo much in and of this world, as will give reſt and ſatisfaction unto our minds? That is the good inquired after. But, ſaith he, *Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us.* The light of the glory of God in the face of Chriſt Jeſus, is that ſatisfactory good alone, which I deſire and ſeek after.

The ſcripture reproacheth the vanity and folly of the minds of men, in that *they ſpend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which profiteth not.* They engage the vigour of their ſpirits about periſhing things, when they have durable ſubſtance and riches propoſed unto them. How do men for the moſt part exerciſe their minds? what are they converſant about in their thoughts?

Some by them *make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil it in the luſts thereof*, as Rom. xiii. 14. They ſearch about continually in their thoughts for objects ſuited unto their luſts and carnal affections, coining, framing and ſtamping of them in their imaginations. They fix their eyes with delight on toads and ſerpents, with all noiſome filthy objects; refuſing in the mean time, to behold the beauty and glory of the light of the ſun.

So is it with all that ſpend their thoughts about the objects of their ſinful pleaſures, refuſing to look up after one view of this *glory of Chriſt.*

Some keep their thoughts in continual exerciſe about the things of this world, as unto the advantages and emoluments which they expect from them. Hereby are they transformed into the image of the world, becoming earthly, carnal, and vain. Is it becauſe there is *no God in Iſrael, that theſe applications are made unto the idol of Ekron?* That there is no glory, no deſireableneſs in Chriſt for men to inquire after, and fix their minds upon? Oh the blindneſs, the darkneſs, the folly of poor ſinners! *Whom* do they deſpiſe, and *for what?*

Some of more refined parts and notional minds, do ariſe unto a ſedulous meditation on the works of creation and providence. Hence many excellent diſcourſes on that ſubject, adorned with eloquence, are publiſhed among us. And a work this is worthy of our nature, and ſuited unto our rational capacities; yea, the firſt end of our natural endowment with them. But in all theſe things, there is *no glory* in compariſon of what is propoſed unto us in the myſterious conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt. The ſun hath no glory, the moon and ſtars no beauty, the order and influence of the heavenly bodies, have no excellency in compariſon of it.

This is that which the pſalmiſt deſigns to declare, Pſal. viii. 1. *O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who haſt ſet thy glory above the heavens.* ver. 3. *When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the ſtars which thou haſt ordained;* ver. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* ver. 5. *For thou haſt made him a little lower than the angels, and haſt crowned him with glory and honour.* ver. 6. *Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things under his feet.*

He is engaged in a contemplation of the glory of God in his works; and he concludes, that the fabric of heaven, with the *moon* and *ſtars* therein, (for it was his meditation by night, when he beheld them), was exceeding glorious, and greatly to be admired. This caſts his thoughts on the poor, weak, infirm nature of man, which ſeems as nothing in compariſon of thoſe glories above: but immediately hereon falls into an admiration of the wiſdom, goodneſs, and love of God, *exalting that nature* incomparably above all the works of creation, in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, as the apoſtle expounds this place, Heb. ii. 5, 6. *For unto the angels hath he not put in*

ſubjection the world to come, whereof we ſpeak. But one in a certain place teſtified, ſaying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him? This therefore is the higheſt, the beſt, the moſt uſeful object of our thoughts and affections. He who hath had a real view of *this glory*, though he know himſelf to be a poor, ſinful, dying *worm* of the earth, yet would he not be an *angel* in heaven, if thereby he ſhould loſe the ſight of it; for this is the centre wherein all the lines of the manifeſtation of the divine glory do meet and reſt.

Look unto the things of this world, wives, children, poſſeſſions, eſtates, power, friends, and honour; how amiable are they! how deſirable unto the thoughts of the moſt of men! But he who hath obtained a view of the glory of Chriſt, will in the midſt of them all ſay, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I deſire beſides thee*, Pſal. lxiii. 25. *For who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* Pſal. lxxxix. 6.

He himſelf out of his infinite love and ineffable condeſcenſion, upon the ſight and view of his church, and his own graces in her, wherewith ſhe is adorned, doth ſay; *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck*, Cant. iv. 9. How much more ought a believing ſoul, upon a view of the glory of Chriſt, in whom it pleaſed the Father that all fulneſs ſhould dwell, to ſay, Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, taken it away from me, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth*; one glance of thy glorious beauty upon me, hath quite overcome me, hath left no heart in me unto things here below? If it be not thus with us frequently, if we value not this object of our minds and affections, if we are not diligent in looking up to him, to behold his glory, it is becauſe we are *carnal*, and not in any good meaſure partakers of the promiſe, that *our eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty.*

2. Our ſecond direction unto the ſame end is, That *we diligently ſtudy the ſcriptures, and the revelations that are made of this glory of Chriſt therein.* To behold it, is not a work of fancy or imagination. It is not converſing with an image framed by the art of men *without*, or that of our own fancy *within*; but of faith exerciſed on divine revelations. This direction he gives us himſelf, John v. 39. *Search the ſcriptures, for they are they that teſtify of me.* The way whereby this is done, is fully ſet before us in the example of the holy prophets un-

der the Old Teſtament, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12, 13. *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be ſober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.*

This principle is always to be retained in our minds in *reading of the ſcripture*, namely, that the revelation and doctrine of the perſon of Chriſt and his office, is the foundation whereon all other inſtructions of the prophets and apoſtles for the edification of the church are built, and whereinto they are reſolved, as is declared, Eph. ii. 20, 21, 22. *And are built upon the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you alſo are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.* So our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf at large makes it manifeſt, Luke xxiv. 26, 27. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moſes, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the ſcriptures the things concerning himſelf.* ver. 45. *Then opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures.* ver. 46. *And ſaid unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead the third day.* Lay aſide the conſideration hereof, and the ſcriptures are no ſuch thing as they pretend unto; namely, a revelation of the glory of God in the ſalvation of the church; nor are thoſe of the Old Teſtament ſo at this day unto the Jews, who own not this principle, 2 Cor. iii. 13.—16. *And not as Moſes, which put a vail over his face, that that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame vail untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament; which vail is done away in Chriſt. But even unto this day, when Moſes is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the vail ſhall be taken away.* There are therefore ſuch *revelations* of the perſon and glory of Chriſt treaſured up in the ſcripture, from the beginning unto the end of it, as may exerciſe the faith and contemplation of believers in this world; and ſhall never, during this life, be fully diſcovered or underſtood; and in the divine

meditations of theſe revelations, doth much of the *life of faith* conſiſt.

There are three ways whereby the glory of Chriſt is repreſented unto us in the ſcripture. *Firſt*, By *direct deſcriptions* of his glorious perſon and incarnation. See among other places, Gen. iii. 15. Pſal. ii. 7, 8, 9. Pſal. xlv. 2.—6. Plal. xlviii. 17. 18. Pſal. cx. Iſa. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4. chap. ix. 6. Zech. ii. 8. John i. 1, 2, 3. Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. chap. ii. 14, 15, 16. Rev. i. 17, 18. *Secondly*, By *prophecies*, promiſes, and expreſs inſtructions concerning him, all leading unto the contemplation of his glory, which are innumerable. *Thirdly*, By the ſacred inſtitutions of divine worſhip under the Old Teſtament: for the end of them all was to repreſent unto the church the glory of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

We may take notice of an inſtance in one kind under the Old Teſtament, and of one and another under the New.

His *perſonal appearances* under the Old Teſtament, carried in them a demonſtration of his glory: ſuch was that in the viſion which Iſaiah had, *when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him*, chap. vi. 1, 2. *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it ſtood the ſeraphims*, &c. It was a repreſentation of the glory of the divine preſence of Chriſt filling his human nature, the *temple of his body*, with a *train* of all glorious graces. And if this *typical* repreſentation of it was ſo glorious, as that the *ſeraphims* were not able ſtedfaſtly to behold it, but *covered their faces* upon its appearance, ver. 2. how exceeding glorious is it in itſelf, as it is openly revealed in the goſpel?

Of the ſame nature are the immediate teſtimonies given unto him from heaven in the New Teſtament: ſo the apoſtle tells us, *he received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came ſuch a voice unto him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, 2 Pet. i. 17. The apoſtle intends the time of his transfiguration in the mount, for ſo he adds, ver. 18. *And this voice which came from heaven we heard, who were with him in the holy mount.* Howbeit, at ſundry other times he had the ſame teſtimony, or to the ſame purpoſe, from God even the Father in heaven. Herein God gave him *honour and glory*, which all thoſe that believe in him ſhould behold and admire; not only thoſe who heard this teſtimony with their bodily ears, but all unto whom it is teſtified in the ſcripture, are obliged to look after, and contemplate on the glory of Chriſt, as thus revealed and propoſed.

From the throne of his excellency by audible voices, by viſible ſigns, by the opening of the heavens above, by the deſcent of the holy Spirit upon him, God teſtified unto him as his eternal Son, and gave him therein honour and glory. The thoughts of this divine teſtimony, and the glory of Chriſt therein, hath often filled the hearts of ſome with joy and delight.

This therefore in reading and ſtudying the holy ſcripture, we ought with all diligence to ſearch and attend unto, as did the prophets of old, 2 Tim. iii. 15. if we intend by them to be made *wiſe unto ſalvation.*

We ſhould herein be as the *merchant-man* that ſeeks for pearls; he ſeeks for all ſorts of them, but when he hath found one of *great price*, he parts with all to make it his own, Matth. xiii. 45, 46. The ſcripture is the field, the place, the mine where we ſearch and dig for pearls; Prov. ii. 1.—5. *My ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ſo that thou incline thine ear unto wiſdom, and apply thine heart to underſtanding: yea, if thou crieſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding: if thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her, as for hid treaſures: then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord; and find the knowledge of God.* Every ſacred truth that is made effectual unto the good of our ſouls, is a pearl, whereby we are enriched; but when we meet with, when we fall upon this pearl of price, the glory of Chriſt, this is that which the ſoul of a believer cleaves unto with joy.

Then do we find *food for our ſouls* in the word of truth, then do we taſte how gracious the Lord is therein, then is the ſcripture full of refreſhment unto us, as a ſpring of living water, when we are taken into bleſſed views of the glory of Chriſt therein. And we are in the beſt frame of duty, when the principal motive in our minds to contend earneſtly for retaining the poſſeſſion of the ſcripture, againſt all that would deprive us of it, or diſcourage us from a daily diligent ſearch into it, is this, that they would take from us the only *glaſs* wherein we may behold the glory of Chriſt. This is the glory of the ſcripture, that it is the great, yea, the *only* outward means of repreſenting unto us the glory of Chriſt; and he is the Sun in the firmament of it, which only hath light in itſelf, and communicates it unto all other things beſides.

3. Another direction unto this ſame end, is, that having attained the light of the knowledge of the glory of Chriſt from the ſcripture, or by the diſpenſation of the truth in the preaching of the goſpel, *we would eſteem it our duty frequently to medi-*

tate thereon. Want hereof is that fundamental miſtake which keeps many among us ſo low in their grace, ſo regardleſs of their privileges. They hear of theſe things, they aſſent unto their truth, at leaſt they do not gainſay them; but they never *ſolemnly meditate* upon them. This they eſteem a work that is *above* them, or are *ignorant* totally of it, or eſteem themſelves not much concerned in it, or *diſlike* it as a *fanataciſm.* For it is that which no conſiderations can engage a carnal mind to delight in. The mind muſt be ſpiritual and holy, freed from earthly affections and incumbrances, raiſed above things here below, that can in a due manner meditate on the glory of Chriſt. Therefore are the moſt ſtrangers unto this duty, becauſe they will not be at the trouble and charge of that mortification of earthly affections, that extirpation of ſenſual inclinations, that retirement from the occaſion of life, which are required thereunto. See the *Treatiſe of ſpiritual mindedneſs.*

It is to be feared that there are ſome who profeſs religion with an *appearance of ſtrictneſs,* who never ſeparate themſelves from all other occaſions to *meditate on Chriſt and his glory.* And yet with a ſtrange inconſiſtency of apprehenſions, they will profeſs that they deſire nothing more, than to *behold his glory in heaven for ever.* But it is evident even in the light of reaſon, that theſe things are irreconcileable. It is impoſſible that he who never meditates with delight on the glory of Chriſt here in this world, who labours not to behold it by *faith* as it is revealed in the ſcripture, ſhould ever have any real *gracious deſire* to behold it in heaven. They may love and deſire the fruition of their imaginations, they cannot do ſo of the glory of Chriſt whereof they are ignorant, and wherewith they are unacquainted. It is therefore to be lamented, that men can find time for, and have inclinations to think and meditate on other things, it may be earthly and vain; but have neither heart nor inclinations, nor leiſure to meditate on this glorious object. What is the faith and love which ſuch men profeſs? How will they find themſelves deceived in the iſſue?

4. Let your *occaſional thoughts of Chriſt be many,* and multiplied every day; he is not far from us, we may make a ſpeedy addreſs unto him at any time: ſo the apoſtle informs us, Rom. x. 6, 7, 8. *Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven?* (that is, to bring Chriſt down from above) *or, Who ſhall deſcend into the deep?* (that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead.) *For the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.* The things that Chriſt did, were done at a diſtance from us, and they are long ſince paſt. But ſaith the apoſtle,

the *word of the goſpel* wherein theſe things are revealed, and whereby an application is made of them unto our ſouls, is *nigh unto us, even in our hearts;* that is, if we are true believers, and have mixed the word with faith; and ſo it exhibiteth Chriſt and all the benefits of his mediation unto us. If therefore this word is in our hearts, Chriſt is nigh unto us. If we turn at any time into ourſelves to converſe with the word that abideth in us, there we ſhall find him ready to receive us into communion with himſelf; that is, in the light of the knowledge of Chriſt which we have by the word, we may have ſudden occaſional thoughts of him continually: and where our minds and affections are ſo filled with other things, that we are not ready for converſe with him who is thus nigh unto us by the word, we are ſpiritually indiſpoſed.

So to manifeſt how nigh he is unto us, it is ſaid that *he ſtands at the door and knocks*, Rev. iii. 20. in the continual tender that he makes of himſelf and his grace unto our ſouls. For he is always accompanied with the glorious train of his graces, and if they are not received, he himſelf is not ſo. It is to no purpoſe to boaſt of Chriſt, if we have not an evidence of his graces in our hearts and lives. But unto whom he is the *hope of future glory*, unto them he is the *life* of preſent grace.

Sometimes it may be, that he is withdrawn from us, ſo as that we cannot *hear his voice, nor behold his countenance*, nor obtain any ſenſe of his love, though we ſeek him with diligence. In this ſtate all our thoughts and meditations concerning him will be barren and fruitleſs, bringing in no ſpiritual refreſhment into our ſouls. And if we learn to be content with ſuch lifeleſs, inaffecting thoughts of him, as bring in no experience of his love, nor give us a real view of the glory of his perſon, we ſhall wither away as unto all the power of religion.

What is our duty in this caſe, is ſo fully expreſſed by the ſpouſe in the Canticles, as repreſents it plainly unto the minds of believers, who have any exprerience of theſe things, chap. i.—5. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city, found me: to whom I ſaid, Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? It was but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go.* The like account ſhe gives of herſelf, and of her behaviour on the like occaſion, chap. v. 2.—8. *I ſleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, ſaying,*

Open to me, my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them? My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I roſe up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with ſweet ſmelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone, my ſoul failed when he ſpake: I ſought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no anſwer. The watchmen that went about the city, found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my vail from me. I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am ſick of love.

This is the ſubſtance of what by this example we are inſtructed unto. The Lord Chriſt is pleaſed ſometimes to withdraw himſelf from the *ſpiritual experience* of believers, as unto any refreſhing ſenſe of his love, or the freſh communications of conſolatory graces. Thoſe who never had experience of any ſuch thing, who never had any refreſhing communion with him, cannot be ſenſible of his *abſence*, they never were ſo of his *preſence*. But thoſe whom he hath viſited, to whom he hath *given of his loves*, with whom he hath made his *abode*, whom he hath refreſhed, relieved, and comforted, in whom he hath lived in the power of his grace, they know what it is to be *forſaken* by him, though but *for a moment*. And their trouble is increaſed, when they ſeek him with diligence in the wonted ways of obtaining his preſence, and cannot find him. Our duty in this caſe is, to perſevere in our inquiries after him in prayer, meditation, mourning, reading, and hearing of the word, in all ordinances of divine worſhip, private and public, in diligent obedience, until we find him, or he return unto us, as in former days.

It were well if all churches and profeſſors now would manifeſt the ſame diligence herein, as did the church of old in this example. Many of them, if they are not hardened by the deceitfulneſs of ſin, cannot but be ſenſible that the Lord Chriſt is variouſly withdrawn from them, if ever they had experience of the power of his preſence: yet are the generality of them far from the frame of heart here deſcribed in the *ſpouſe*; for they are ſlothful, careleſs, negligent, and ſtir not up themſelves to inquire after him, or his return unto their ſouls. So was it with Laodicea of old, ſo was it with Sardis, and ſo it is to be feared that it is with many at preſent. But to return.

Generally Chriſt is *nigh unto believers*, and of a ready acceſs; and the principal actings of the life of faith, conſiſts in the frequency of our thoughts concerning him; for hereby *Chriſt liveth* in us, as he is ſaid to do, Gal. ii. 20. This we cannot do, unleſs we have frequent thoughts of him, and converſe with him. It is often ſaid among men, that one lives in another; this cannot be but where the affections of one are ſo engaged unto another, that night and day he thinks of him, and is thereby as it were preſent with him. So ought it to be between Chriſt and believers. He dwells in them by faith; but the actings of this life in them (as wherever life is, it will be in act and exerciſe) are proportionable unto their thoughts of him, and delight in him.

If therefore we would *behold the glory of Chriſt*; the preſent direction is, that on all occaſions, and frequently when there are no occaſions for it by the performance of other duties, we would abound in thoughts of him and his glory. I intend not at preſent, fixed and ſtated *meditations*, which were ſpoken unto before; but ſuch *thoughts* as are more tranſient, according as our opportunities are. And a great rebuke it ought to be unto us, when Chriſt hath at any time in a day been long out of our minds. The ſpouſe affirms, that *ere ſhe was aware, her ſoul made her as the chariots of Amminadib*, Cant. vi. 12. It ſo fell out, that when ſhe had no thoughts, no deſign or purpoſe for attendance or communion with Chriſt, that ſhe was ſurpiſed into a readineſs and willingneſs unto it. So will it be with them that love him in ſincerity. Their own *ſouls*, without previous deſigns or outward occaſions, will frequently engage them in holy thoughts of him, which is the moſt eminent character of a truly ſpiritual Chriſtian.

5. The next direction is, That all our thoughts concerning Chriſt and his glory, ſhould be accompanied with *admiration, adoration, and thankſgiving*. For this ſuch an object of our thoughts and affections, as in this life we can never fully comprehend; an ocean whoſe depths we cannot look into. If we are ſpiritually renewed, all the faculties of our ſouls are enabled by grace to exert their reſpective powers towards this glorious object. This muſt be done in various duties, by the exerciſe of various graces, as they are to be acted by the diſtinct powers of the faculties of our minds. This is that which is intended, where we are commanded *to love the Lord with all our ſouls, with all our minds, with all our ſtrength*. All the diſtinct powers of our ſouls are to be acted by diſtinct graces and duties, in cleaving unto God by love. In heaven, when

we are come to our centre, that ſtate of reſt and bleſſedneſs which our nature is ultimately capable of, nothing but one infinite invariable object of our minds and affections received by *viſion*, can render that ſtate uninterrupted and unchangeable. But whilſt we are here, we *know*, or *ſee but in part*, and we muſt alſo act our faith and love, on parts of that glory, which is not at once entirely propoſed unto us, and which as yet we cannot comprehend. Wherefore we muſt act various graces in great variety about it; ſome at one time, ſome at another, according unto the powers of all our renewed faculties. Of this ſort are thoſe mentioned of *adoration*, *admiration*, and *thankſgiving*; which are thoſe acts of our minds wherein all others do iſſue, when the object is incomprehenſible. For unto them we are enabled by grace.

One end of his illuſtrious coming unto the judgment of the laſt day is, that he may be *admired in all them that believe*, 2 Theſſ. i. 10. Even believers themſelves ſhall be filled with an overwhelming admiration, upon his glorious appearance. Or, if the meaning be, not that he ſhall be admired *by them*, but admired *in them*, becauſe of the mighty works of his grace and power in their redemption, ſanctification, reſurrection, and glory, it is to the ſame purpoſe, he *comes to be admired*. And according to the proſpect which we have of that glory ought our admiration to be. And this *admiration* will iſſue in *adoration* and *thankſgiving*; whereof we have an eminent inſtance and example in the whole church of the redeemed, Rev. v. 9.—13. *They ſang a new ſong, ſaying, Worthy art thou to receive the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt bought us unto God by thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us kings and prieſts unto God: and we ſhall reign upon the earth. And I ſaw, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and of the living creatures, and of the elders: and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands; ſaying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. And every creature that is in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and that are in the ſea, and all things in them, heard I, ſaying, Bleſſing, and honour, and power, and glory, be unto him that ſits on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

The deſign of this diſcourſe is no more, but that when by faith we have attained a view of the glory of Chriſt, in our contemplations on his perſon, we ſhould not paſs it over as a

notion of truth which we aſſent unto, namely, that he is thus glorious in himſelf; but endeavour to affect our hearts with it, as that wherein our own principal intereſt doth lie; wherein it will be effectual unto the *transformation* of our ſouls into his image. But ſome it may be will ſay, at leaſt I fear ſome may truly ſay, that theſe things do not belong unto them, they do not find that ever they had any benefit by them. They hope to be ſaved as well as others by the mediation of Chriſt: but as unto this *beholding of his glory*, by conſtant meditation and actings of faith therein, they know nothing of it, nor are concerned in it. The doctrine which they are taught out of the ſcripture concerning the perſon of Chriſt, they give their aſſent unto; but his glory they hope they ſhall ſee in an another world; here they never yet inquired after it.

So it will be. It is well if theſe things be not only *neglected*, becauſe the minds of men are carnal, and cannot diſcern ſpiritual things; but alſo *deſpiſed*, becauſe they have an enmity unto them. It is not for all to walk in theſe retired paths; not for them who are negligent and ſlothful, whoſe minds are earthly and carnal. Nor can they herein ſit at the feet of Chriſt with Mary, when ſhe *choſe the better part*, who like Martha, are *cumbered about many things* here in this world. Thoſe whoſe principal deſign is to add unto their preſent enjoyments, (in the midſt of the proſecution whereof, they are commonly taken from them, ſo as that their thoughts do periſh, becauſe not accompliſhed), will never underſtand theſe things. Much leſs will they do ſo, whoſe work it is to make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil it in the luſts thereof.

They muſt make it their deſign to be heavenly-minded, who will find a reliſh in theſe things. Thoſe who are ſtrangers unto holy meditation in general, will be ſtrangers unto this myſtery in a peculiar manner. Some men can think of the world, of their relations, and the manifold occaſions of life; but as unto the things that are above and within the vail, they are not concerned in them.

With ſome it is otherwiſe. They profeſs their deſire to *behold the glory of Chriſt by faith*, but they find it, as they complain, too high and difficult for them. They are at a loſs in their minds, and even overwhelmed, when they begin to *view his glory*. They are like the diſciples, who ſaw him in his *tranſfiguration*; they were filled with amazement, and knew not what to ſay, or ſaid they knew not what. And I do acknowledge, that the *weakneſs* of our minds in the comprehenſion of this eternal glory of Chriſt, and their inſtability in me-

ditations thereon, whence we cannot ſtedfaſtly look on it, or behold it, gives us an afflicting, abaſing conſideration of our preſent ſtate and condition. And I ſhall ſay no more unto this caſe but this alone: when faith can no longer hold open the eyes of our underſtandings, unto the beholding of the Sun of righteouſneſs ſhining in his beauty, nor exerciſe orderly thoughts about this incomprehenſible object, it will betake itſelf unto that holy *admiration* which we have ſpoken unto; and therein it will put itſelf forth in pure acts of love and complacency.

CHAP. IV.

The glory of Chriſt, in his ſuſception of the office of a Mediator. Firſt, In his condeſcenſion.

THE things whereof we have thus far diſcourſed, relating immediately unto the perſon of Chriſt in itſelf, may ſeem to have ſomewhat of difficulty in them, unto ſuch whoſe minds are not duly exerciſed in the contemplation of heavenly things. Unto others they are evident in their own experience, and inſtructive unto them that are willing to learn. That which remains will be yet more plain unto the underſtanding and capacity of the meaneſt believer. And this is the glory of Chriſt in his office of Mediator, and the diſcharge thereof.

In our *beholding of the glory of Chriſt* herein, doth the exerciſe of faith in this life principally conſiſt; ſo the apoſtle declares it, Phil. iii. 8.—12. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord:—To know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, and to be made conformable unto his death.* This therefore we muſt treat of ſomewhat more at large.

There is one God, ſaith the apoſtle, *and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. In that great difference between God and man, occaſioned by our ſin and apoſtaſy from him, which of itſelf could iſſue in nothing but the utter ruin of the whole race of mankind, there was none in heaven or earth in their original nature and operations, who was meet or able to make up a *righteous peace* between them. Yet muſt this be done by a *Mediator*, or ceaſe for ever.

This Mediator could not be God himſelf abſolutely conſidered; *for a Mediator is not of one, but God is one*, Gal. iii. 20. Whatever God might do herein in a way of ſovereign grace,

yet he could not do it in the way of mediation, which yet was neceſſary unto his own glory, as we have at large diſcourſed elſewhere.

And as for *creatures*, there was none in heaven or earth that was meet to undertake this office. *For if one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* 1 Sam. ii. 25. *There is not any days-man betwixt us, to lay his hand upon us both*, Job ix. 33.

In this ſtate of things, the Lord Chriſt as the Son of God ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; ſacrifice and burnt offerings thou wouldſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me: and, lo, I come to do thy will*, Heb. x. 5.---9. By the aſſumption of our nature into union with himſelf, in his one divine perſon, he became every way meet for the diſcharge of this office, and undertakes it accordingly.

That which we inquire after at preſent, is the glory of Chriſt herein, and how we may behold that glory. And there are three things wherein we take a proſpect of it.

I. In his ſuſception of this office.

II. In his diſcharge of it.

III. In the event and conſequence thereof; or what enſued thereon.

In the ſuſception of this office, we may behold the glory of Chriſt, (1.) In his *condeſcenſion*. (2.) In his *love*.

Firſt, We may behold his glory in his *infinite condeſcenſion* to take this office on him, and our nature to be his own unto that end. It did not befal him by lot or chance, it was not *impoſed* on him againſt his will, it belonged not unto him by any *neceſſity* of nature or condition, he ſtood not in need of it, it was no addition unto him; but of his own mind and accord, he graciouſly condeſcended unto the ſuſception and diſcharge of it. So the apoſtle expreſſeth it, Phil. ii. 5.---8. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took on himſelf the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.*

It was the *mind that was in Chriſt Jeſus*, which is propoſed unto our conſideration and imitation; what he was inclined and diſpoſed unto from himſelf and his *own mind* alone. And that in general which is aſcribed unto him, is *exinanition* or *ſelf-emptineſs: he emptied himſelf.* This the ancient church called his συγκαταβασις, as we do his *condeſcenſion*, an act of which

kind in God is called the *humbling of himſelf*, Pſal. cxiii. 6. Wherefore the ſuſception of our nature for the diſcharge of the office of mediation therein, was an *infinite condeſcenſion* in the Son of God, wherein he is exceedingly glorious in the eyes of believers.

And I ſhall do theſe three things. (1.) Shew in general the *greatneſs* of this condeſcenſion. (2.) Declare the *eſpecial nature* of it. And, (3.) Take what view we are able of the *glory of Chriſt* therein.

1*ſt*, Such is the tranſcendent excellency of the divine nature, that it is ſaid of God, that *he dwelleth on high, and humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth*, Pſal. cxiii. 5, 6. He *condeſcends* from the prerogative of his excellency, to behold, to look upon, to take notice of the moſt glorious things in heaven above, and the greateſt things in the earth below. All his reſpect unto the creatures, the moſt glorious of them, is an act of *infinite condeſcenſion*. And it is ſo on two accounts.

1. Becauſe of the *infinite diſtance* that is between his eſſence, nature, or being, and that of the creatures. Hence *all nations before him are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance; yea, that they are as nothing, that they are accounted unto him leſs than nothing and vanity*. All being is eſſentially in him, and in compariſon thereunto, all other things are as *nothing*. And there are no meaſures, there is no proportion between *infinite being* and *nothing*; nothing that ſhould induce a regard from the one unto the other. Wherefore, the infinite, eſſential greatneſs of the nature of God, with its infinite diſtance from the nature of all creatures thereby, cauſeth all his dealings with them to be in the way of *condeſcenſion* or humbling himſelf. So it is expreſſed, Iſa. lvii. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him alſo who is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones*. He is ſo the high and lofty One, and ſo inhabiteth eternity, or exiſteth in his own eternal being, that it is an act of mere grace in him, to take notice of things below; and therefore he doth it in an eſpecial manner of thoſe whom the world doth moſt deſpiſe.

2. It ariſeth from his *infinite ſelf-ſufficiency* unto all the acts and ends of his own eternal bleſſedneſs. What we have a regard unto, what we reſpect and deſire, it is that it may add unto our ſatisfaction. So it is, ſo it muſt be with every creature; no creature is ſelf-ſufficient unto its own bleſſedneſs.

The human nature of Chriſt himſelf in heaven is not ſo; it lives in God, and God in it, in a full dependence on God, and in receiving bleſſed and glorious communications from him. No rational creature, angel or man, can do, think, act any thing, but it is all to add to their perfection and ſatisfaction, they are not *ſelf-ſufficient.* God alone wants nothing, ſtands in need of nothing, nothing can be added unto him, ſeeing he *giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things,* Acts xvii. 25. The whole creation in all its excellency cannot contribute one mite unto the ſatisfaction or bleſſedneſs of God. He hath it all in infinite perfection from himſelf and his own nature; our goodneſs extends not unto him; *A man cannot profit God as he may profit his neighbour. If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? and if thy tranſgreſſions are multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?* (God loſeth nothing of his own ſelf-ſufficiency and bleſſedneſs therein, by all this:) *and if thou be righteous, what giveſt thou unto him, or what receiveth he at thy hand?* Job xxxv. 6, 7, 8. And from hence alſo it follows, that all God's concernment in the creation, is by an act of condeſcenſion.

How glorious then is the *condeſcenſion* of the Son of God in his *ſuſception of the office of mediation?* For if ſuch be the perfection of the divine nature, and its diſtance ſo abſolutely infinite from the whole creation, and if ſuch be his ſelf-ſufficiency unto his own eternal bleſſedneſs, as that nothing can be taken from him, nothing added unto him, ſo that every regard in him unto any of the creatures, is an act of *ſelf-humiliation* and *condeſcenſion* from the prerogative of his being and ſtate; what heart can conceive, what tongue can expreſs the glory of that *condeſcenſion* in the Son of God, whereby he took our nature upon him, took it to be his own in order unto a diſcharge of the office of mediation on our behalf?

But, 2*dly*, That we may the better behold the glory of Chriſt herein, we may briefly conſider the *eſpecial nature* of this condeſcenſion, and wherein it doth conſiſt. But whereas, not only the denial, but miſapprehenſions hereof have peſtered the church of God in all ages, we muſt in the firſt place reject them, and then declare the truth.

1. This *condeſcenſion* of the Son of God did not conſiſt in a *laying aſide*, or *parting with*, or *ſeparation from* the divine nature, ſo as that he ſhould ceaſe to be God, by being man. The foundation of it lay in this, that *he was in the form of God, and counted it not robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. ii. 6. That is, being really and eſſentially God in his divine nature, he

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profeſſed himſelf therein to be equal with God or the perſon of the Father. He was in the *form* of *God*, that is, he was God, participant of the divine nature, for God hath no *form* but that of his eſſence and being; and hence he was equal with God, in authority, dignity, and power. Becauſe he was in the form of God, he muſt be equal with God, for there is *order* in the divine perſons, but no *inequality* in the divine Being. So the Jews underſtood him, that when he ſaid, *God was his Father, he made himſelf equal with God.* For in his ſo ſaying, he aſcribed unto himſelf equal power with the Father, as unto all divine operations, *My Father*, ſaith he, *worketh hitherto, and I work*, John v. 17, 18. And they by whom his divine nature is denied, do caſt this *condeſcenſion of Chriſt* quite out of our religion, as that which hath no reality or ſubſtance in it. But we ſhall ſpeak of them afterwards.

Being in this ſtate, it is ſaid that he *took on him the form of a ſervant, and was found in faſhion as a man*, Phil. ii. 7. This is his condeſcenſion. It is not ſaid, that he ceaſed to be in the form of God; but continuing ſo to be, he *took on him the form of a ſervant* in our nature: he became what he was not, but he ceaſed not to be what he was; ſo he teſtifieth of himſelf, John iii. 13. *No man hath aſcended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of man which is in heaven.* Although he was then on earth as the Son of man; yet he ceaſed not to be God thereby; in his divine nature he was then alſo in heaven. He who *is God*, can no more be *not God*, than he who is *not God*, can *be God*: and our difference with the Socinians herein is, we believe that Chriſt being God, was made *man* for our ſakes; they ſay, that being only a man, he was *made a God* for his own ſake.

This then is the foundation of the glory of Chriſt in this condeſcenſion, the life and ſoul of all heavenly truth and myſteries; namely, that the *Son of God* becoming in *time* to be what he was not, the *Son of man*, ceaſed not thereby to be what he was, even the *eternal* Son of God. Wherefore,

2. Much leſs did this condeſcenſion conſiſt in the *converſion of the divine nature into the human*, which was the imagination of ſome of the Arians of old, and we have yet (to my own knowledge) ſome that follow them in the ſame dotage. They ſay that the *Word which was in the beginning*, by which all things were made, being in itſelf an effect of the divine will and power, was in the fulneſs of time *turned into fleſh*; that is, the *ſubſtance* of it was ſo, as the *water* in the miracle wrought by our Saviour, was turned into *wine*; for by an act of the di-

vine power of Chriſt it ceaſed to be *water* ſubſtantially, and was *wine* only; not water mixed with wine: ſo theſe men ſuppoſe a *ſubſtantial change* of the one nature into the other, of the divine nature into the human; like what the Papiſts imagine in their *tranſubſtantiation*: ſo they ſay God was made man, his eſſence being turned into that of a man.

But this no way belongs unto the condeſcenſion of Chriſt. We may call it *Ichabod*, it hath *no glory* in it. It deſtroys both his natures, and leaves him a perſon in whom we are not concerned. For according unto this imagination, that *divine nature* wherein he was in the form of God, did in its own form ceaſe to be, yea, was utterly deſtroyed, as being *ſubſtantially* changed into the nature of man; as the *water* did ceaſe to be, when it was turned into *wine*; and that human nature which was made thereof, hath no alliance or kindred unto us, or our nature, ſeeing it was not *made of a woman*, but of the ſubſtance of the Word.

3. There was not in this *condeſcenſion*, the leaſt *change* or alteration in the divine nature. Eutyches, and thoſe that followed him of old, conceived that the two natures of Chriſt, the *divine and human, were mixed* and compounded as it were into one: and this could not be without an alteration in the divine nature, for it would be made to be eſſentially what it was not; for one nature hath but one and the ſame eſſence.

But as we ſaid before; although the Lord Chriſt himſelf in his perſon was made to be what he was not before, in that our nature hereby was made to be his, yet his divine nature was not ſo: there is in it neither *variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning*. It abode the ſame in him in all its eſſential properties, actings, and bleſſedneſs, as it was from eternity. It neither did, acted, nor ſuffered any thing, but what is proper unto the divine Being: the Lord Chriſt did and ſuffered many things in life and death, in his own perſon, by his human nature, wherein the divine neither did, nor ſuffered any thing at all; although in the doing of them, his perſon be denominated from that nature; ſo *God purchaſed his church with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28.

It may then be ſaid, What did the Lord Chriſt in this *condeſcenſion*, with reſpect unto his divine nature? The apoſtle tells us, that he *humbled himſelf, and made himſelf of no reputation*, Phil. ii. 7, 8. He vailed the glory of his divine nature in ours, and what he did therein, ſo as that there was no outward appearance or manifeſtation of it. The world hereon was ſo far from looking on him as the *true God*, that it be-

lieved him not to be a *good man.* Hence they could never bear the leaſt intimation of his divine nature, ſuppoſing themſelves ſecured from any ſuch thing, becauſe they looked on him with their eyes to be a *man*, as he was indeed, no leſs truly and really than any one of themſelves. Wherefore on that teſtimony given of himſelf, *Before Abraham was, I am*, which aſſerts a pre-exiſtence from eternity in another nature than what they ſaw, they were filled with rage, and *took up ſtones to caſt at him*, John viii. 58, 59. And they give a reaſon of their madneſs, John x. 33. namely, that *he being a man, ſhould make himſelf to be God.* This was ſuch a thing, they thought, as could never enter into the heart of a wiſe and ſober man, namely, that being ſo, owning himſelf to be ſuch, he ſhould yet ſay of himſelf, that he was *God:* this is that which no *reaſon* can comprehend, which nothing in nature can parallel or illuſtrate, that one and the ſame perſon ſhould be both God and man. And this is the principal plea of the Socinians at this day, who through the Mahometans ſucceed unto the Jews in an oppoſition unto the divine nature of Chriſt.

But all this difficulty is ſolved by the *glory of Chriſt in this condeſcenſion;* for although in himſelf, or his own divine perſon, he was *over all God bleſſed for ever*, yet he *humbled himſelf for the ſalvation* of the church, unto the eternal glory of God, to take our nature upon him, and to be made man: and thoſe who cannot ſee a divine glory in his ſo doing, do neither know him, nor love him, nor believe in him, nor do any way belong unto him,

So is it with the men of theſe abominations. Becauſe they cannot behold the *glory* hereof, they deny the foundation of our religion, namely, the divine perſon of Chriſt. Seeing he would be made *man*, he ſhall be eſteemed by them *no more* than a man. So do they reject that glory of God, his infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace, wherein he is more concerned than in the whole creation. And they dig up the root of all evangelical truths, which are nothing but branches from it.

It is true, and muſt be confeſſed, that herein it is that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a *ſtumbling-ſtone, and a rock of offence* unto the world. If we ſhould confeſs him *only as a prophet, a man ſent by God*, there would not be much conteſt about him, nor oppoſition unto him. The Mahometans do all acknowledge it, and the Jews would not long deny it; for their hatred againſt him was, and is ſolely becauſe he profeſſed himſelf to be God, and as ſuch was believed on in the world. And at

this day, partly through the inſinuation of the Socinians, and partly from the efficacy of their own blindneſs and unbelief, multitudes are willing to grant him to be a prophet ſent of God, who do not, who will not, who cannot believe the myſtery of this *condeſcenſion* in the ſuſception of our nature, nor ſee the glory of it. But take this away, and all our religion is taken away with it. Farewel Chriſtianity as unto the myſtery, the glory, the truth, the efficacy of it; let a refined Heatheniſm be eſtabliſhed in its room. But this is the *rock* on which the church is built, againſt which the gates of hell ſhall not prevail.

4. This *condeſcenſion* of Chriſt was not by a *phantaſm* or an appearance only. One of the firſt hereſies that peſtered the church immediately after the days of the apoſtles, was this, that all that was done or ſuffered by Chriſt as a man, were not the acts, doings, or ſufferings of one that was truly and really a man, but an outward repreſentation of things, like the *appearance of angels* in the *ſhape of men*, eating and drinking under the Old Teſtament; and ſuitably hereunto ſome in our days have ſpoken; namely, that there was only an appearance of Chriſt in the man *Jeſus* at Jeruſalem, in whom he ſuffered no more than in other believers. But the ancient Chriſtians told thoſe men the truth; namely, that *as they had feigned unto themſelves an imaginary Chriſt, ſo they ſhould have an imaginary ſalvation only.*

But the true nature of this divine condeſcenſion doth conſiſt in theſe three things:

1. That the *eternal perſon of the Son of God, or the divine nature in the perſon of the Son of God, did by an ineffable act of his divine power and love, aſſume our nature into an individual ſubſiſtence, in or with himſelf; that is, to be his own, even as the divine nature is his.* This is the infallible foundation of faith even to them who can comprehend very little of theſe divine myſteries. They can and do believe that the Son of God did take our nature to be his *own*, ſo as that whatever was done therein, was done by him, as it is with every other man. Every man hath human nature appropriated unto himſelf by an *individual ſubſiſtence*; whereby he becomes to be *that man which he is, and not another*; or that nature which is common unto all, becomes in him to be peculiarly his *own*, as if there were none partaker of it but himſelf. Adam in his firſt creation, when all human nature was in him alone, was no more that individual man which he was, than every man is now the man that he is, by his *individual ſubſiſtence*. So the Lord Chriſt

taking that nature which is common unto all, in a peculiar ſubſiſtence in his own perſon, it becometh his, and he *the man Chriſt Jeſus*. This was the *mind that was in him*.

2. By reaſon of this *aſſumption of our nature*, with his doing and ſuffering therein, whereby he was *found in faſhion as a man*, the glory of his divine perſon was vailed, and he *made himſelf of no reputation*. This alſo belongs unto his *condeſcenſion*, as the firſt general effect and fruit of it. But we have ſpoken of it before.

3. It is alſo to be obſerved, that in the *aſſumption of our nature to be his own*, he did not change it into a thing divine and ſpiritual; but preſerved it entire in all its eſſential properties and actings. Hence it really did and ſuffered, was tried, tempted and forſaken, as the ſame nature in any other man might do and be. That nature as it was peculiarly his, and therefore he or his perſon therein, was expoſed unto all the temporary evils which the ſame nature is ſubject unto in any other perſon.

This is a ſhort general view of this *incomprehenſible condeſcenſion* of the Son of God, as it is deſcribed by the apoſtle, Phil. ii. 5.---8. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs*. And this is that wherein in an eſpecial manner we are to *behold the glory of Chriſt by faith* whilſt we are in this world.

But had we the tongue of men and angels, we were not able in juſt meaſure to expreſs the glory of this condeſcenſion. For it is the moſt ineffable effect of the *divine wiſdom* of the Father, and of the *love of the Son*, the higheſt evidence of the *care of God* towards mankind. What can be equal unto it? What can be like it? It is the glory of Chriſtian religion, and the *animating ſoul* of all evangelical truth. This carrieth the *myſtery of the wiſdom of God*, above the reaſon or underſtanding of men and angels, to be the object of faith and admiration only. A myſtery it is that becomes the greatneſs of God, with his infinite diſtance from the whole creation; which renders it unbecoming him that all his ways and works ſhould be comprehenſible by any of his creatures, Job xi. 4, 5. *For thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes. But, O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee.* ver. 9. *The meaſure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the ſea.*

Rom. xi. 34, 35, 36. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller? Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

He who was eternally in the form of God, that is, was eſſentially ſo, God by nature, equally participant of the ſame *divine nature* with God the Father; *God over all, bleſſed for ever;* who humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in heaven and earth: he takes on him the *nature of man*, takes it to be his own; whereby he was no leſs truly a *man* in *time*, than he was truly *God* from *eternity:* and to increaſe the wonder of this myſtery, becauſe it was neceſſary unto the end he deſigned, he ſo *humbled himſelf* in this aſſumption of our nature, as to make himſelf of *no reputation* in this world; yea, unto that degree, that he ſaid of himſelf, that he was a *worm and no man*, in compariſon of them who were of any eſteem.

We *ſpeak* of theſe things in a poor, low, broken manner. We *teach* them as they are revealed in the ſcripture. We labour by faith to adhere unto them as revealed. But when we come into a ſteady, direct view and conſideration of the *thing itſelf*, our minds fail, our hearts tremble, and we can find no reſt, but in an holy admiration of what we cannot comprehend. Here we are at a loſs, and know that we ſhall be ſo whilſt we are in this world: but all the ineffable fruits and benefits of this truth are communicated unto them that do believe.

It is with reference hereunto, that that great promiſe concerning him is given unto the church, Iſa. viii. 14. *He ſhall be for a ſanctuary*, (namely, unto all that believe, as it is expounded, 1 Pet. ii. 8.); *but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them that ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.*

He is herein a *ſanctuary*, an aſſured refuge unto all that betake themſelves unto him. What is it that any man in diſtreſs, who flies thereunto, may look for in a *ſanctuary?* A ſupply of all his wants, a deliverance from all his fears, a defence againſt all his dangers, is propoſed unto him therein. Such is the Lord Chriſt herein unto ſin-diſtreſſed ſouls; he is a refuge unto us in all ſpiritual diſtreſſes and diſconſolations, Heb. vi. 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us.* See the expoſition of the place. Are we or any of us burdened with a ſenſe of ſin? are we perplexed with temptations? are we

bowed down under the oppreſſion of any ſpiritual adverſary? do we on any of theſe accounts walk in darkneſs and have no light? One view of the glory of Chriſt herein is able to ſupport us and relieve us.

Unto whom we betake ourſelves for relief in any caſe, we have regard to nothing but their *will* and their *power*. If they have both, we are ſure of relief. And what ſhall we fear in the *will* of Chriſt as unto this end? what will he not do for us? He who thus *emptied* and *humbled* himſelf, who ſo infinitely condeſcended from the prerogative of his glory in his being and ſelf-ſufficiency, in the ſuſception of our nature for the diſcharge of the office of a Mediator on our behalf; will he not relieve us in all our diſtreſſes? *will* he not do all for us we ſtand in need of, that we may be eternally ſaved? *will* he not be a *ſanctuary* unto us?

Nor have we hereon any ground to fear his *power*: for by this infinite condeſcenſion to be a ſuffering man, he loſt nothing of his power as *God omnipotent*; nothing of his infinite wiſdom or glorious grace. He could ſtill do, all that he could do as God from eternity. If there be any thing therefore in a coaleſcency of *infinite power*, with *infinite condeſcenſion*, to conſtitute a *ſanctuary* for diſtreſſed ſinners, it is all in Chriſt Jeſus. And if we ſee him not glorious herein, it is becauſe there is no *light of faith* in us.

This then *is the reſt wherewith we may cauſe the weary to reſt, and this is the refreſhment. Herein is he an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as a ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land.* Hereon he ſays, *I have ſatiated the weary ſoul, and have refreſhed every ſorrowful ſoul.* Under this conſideration it is, that in all evangelical promiſes and invitations for coming to him, he is propoſed unto diſtreſſed ſinners as their only *ſanctuary*.

Herein is he a *ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence*, unto the believing and diſobedient who *ſtumble at the word*. They cannot, they will not ſee the glory of this *condeſcenſion*, they neither deſire nor labour ſo to do; yea, they hate it and deſpiſe it. Chriſt in it is a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence* unto them. Wherefore they chuſe rather utterly to deny his divine perſon, than allow that he did thus abaſe himſelf for our ſakes. Rather than they will own this glory, they will allow him no glory. A man they ſay he was, and no more, and this was his glory. This is that principle of darkneſs and unbelief, which works effectually at this day in the minds of many. They think it an abſurd thing, as the Jews did of old,

that he being a man ſhould be God alſo; or on the other hand, that the Son of God ſhould thus condeſcend to take our nature on him. This they can ſee no glory in, no relief, no refuge, no refreſhment unto their ſouls in any of their diſtreſſes: therefore do they deny his divine perſon. Here faith triumphs againſt them, it finds that to be a *glorious ſanctuary*, which they cannot at all diſcern.

But it is not ſo much the declaration or vindication of this glory of Chriſt which I am at preſent engaged in, as an exhortation unto the *practical contemplation* of it in a way of believing. And I know that among many this is too much neglected; yea, of all the evils which I have ſeen in the days of my pilgrimage now drawing to their cloſe, there is none ſo grievous as the public contempt of the principal myſteries of the goſpel among them that are called Chriſtians. Religion in the profeſſion of ſome men is withered in its vital principles, weakened in its nerves and ſinews, but thought to be put off with outward gaiety and bravery.

But my exhortation is unto diligence in the contemplation of this *glory of Chriſt*, and the exerciſe of our thoughts about it. Unleſs we are diligent herein, it is impoſſible we ſhould be *ſteady* in the principal *acts of faith*, or *ready* unto the principal *duties of obedience*. The principals act of faith reſpects the *divine perſon* of Chriſt, as all Chriſtians muſt acknowledge. This we can never ſecure, (as hath been declared), if we ſee not his glory in his *condeſcenſion*: and whoever reduceth his notions unto experience, will find that herein his faith ſtands or falls. And the principal duty of our obedience, is *ſelf-denial*, with *readineſs for the croſs*. Hereunto the conſideration of this condeſcenſion of Chriſt is the principal evangelical motive, and that whereinto our obedience in it is to be reſolved, as the apoſtle declares, Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men.* And no man doth *deny himſelf* in a due manner, who doth it not on the conſideration of the *ſelf-denial* of the Son of God. But a prevalent motive this is thereunto. For what are the things wherein we are to deny ourſelves, or forego what we pretend to have right unto? It is in our goods, our liberties, our relations, our lives. And what are they, any, or all of them, in themſelves, or unto us, conſidering our condition, and the end for which we were made? Periſhing things, which whether we will or no, within a few days

death will give us an everlaſting ſeparation from them, under the power of a *fever* or an *aſthma*, &c. as unto our intereſt in them. But how incomparable with reſpect hereunto is that *condeſcenſion* of Chriſt, whereof we have given an account? If therefore we find an unwillingneſs in us, a tergiverſation in our minds, about theſe things when called unto them in a way of duty, one view by faith of the glory of Chriſt in this condeſcenſion, and what he parted from therein, when he made himſelf of no reputation, will be an effectual cure of that ſinful diſtemper.

Herein then, I ſay, we may by *faith* behold the glory of Chriſt, as we ſhall do it by *ſight* hereafter. If we *ſee no glory in it*, if we diſcern not that which is matter of eternal admiration, we walk in darkneſs. It is the moſt ineffable effect of divine wiſdom and grace. Where are our hearts and minds, if we can ſee no glory in it? I know in the contemplation of it, it will quickly overwhelm our *reaſon*, and bring our underſtanding into a loſs: but unto this *loſs* do I deſire to be brought every day; for when faith can no more act itſelf in *comprehenſion*, when it finds the object it is fixed on, too great and glorious to be brought into, our minds and capacities, it will iſſue (as we ſaid before) in holy *admiration*, humble *adoration*, and joyful *thankſgiving*. In and by its actings in them, doth it fill the ſoul with *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*.

CHAP. V.

The glory of Chriſt in his love.

IN the ſuſception and diſcharge of the *mediatory office* by the Son of God, the ſcripture doth moſt eminently repreſent his *love* as the ſole impelling and leading cauſe thereof, Gal. ii. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* 1 John iii. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.* Rev. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*, &c.

Herein is he *glorious*, in a way and manner incomprehenſible: for in the glory of *divine love*, the chief *brightneſs of glory* doth conſiſt. There is nothing of dread or terror accompanying it, not but what is *amiable* and infinitely refreſhing. Now, that we may take a view of the glory of Chriſt herein by faith, the *nature* of it muſt be inquired into.

1. The *eternal diſpoſing cauſe* of the whole work wherein the

Lord Chriſt was engaged by the ſuſception of this office, for the redemption and ſalvation of the church is the *love of the Father*. Hereunto it is conſtantly aſcribed in the ſcripture. And this *love of the Father* acted itſelf in his eternal decrees, before the foundation of the world, Fph. i. 4. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love;* afterwards in the ſending of his Son to render it effectual, John iii. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Originally,* it is his eternal election of a portion of mankind to be brought unto the enjoyment of himſelf, through the myſtery of the blood of Chriſt, and the ſanctification of the Spirit, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. *God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* ver. 16. *Now our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlaſting conſolation, and good hope through grace,* &c. Eph. i. 4. to 9. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wiſdom and prudence, having made known unto us the myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf.* 1 Pet. i. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt: grace unto you and peace be multiplied.*

This *eternal act* of the will of God the Father, doth not *contain* in it an actual approbation of, and complacency in the ſtate and condition of thoſe that are elected; but only *deſigneth* that for them, on the account whereof, they ſhall be accepted and approved. And it is called his *love* on ſundry accounts.

1. Becauſe it is an act ſuited unto that glorious excellency of his nature, wherein he is love; for *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8, 9. And the firſt egreſs of the divine properties muſt therefore be in an act of communicative love. And whereas this election being an eternal act of the will of God, can have no *moving cauſe* but what is in himſelf, if we could look into all the treaſures of the divine excellencies, we ſhould find none whereunto it could be ſo properly aſcribed, as unto *love*. Wherefore,

2. It is ſtiled *love*, becauſe it was *free* and undeſerved as unto any thing on our part. For whatever good is done unto any altogether undeſerved, if it be with a deſign of their profit and advantage, it is in an *act of love*, and can have no other cauſe. So is it with us in reſpect of eternal election. There was nothing in us, nothing foreſeen, as that which *from ourſelves* would be in us, that ſhould any way move the will of God unto this election: for whatever is good in the beſt of men is an effect of it, Eph i. 4. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* Whereas therefore it tends unto our eternal good, the ſpring of it muſt be *love*. And,

3. The *fruits* or *effects* of it are inconceivable acts of love. It is by multiplied acts of love, that it is made effectual, John iii. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Jer. xxxi. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee.* Eph. i. 3.—6. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt: according as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* 1 John iv. 8, 9. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* ver. 16. *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

This is the eternal ſpring which is derived unto the church, through the mediation of Chriſt. Wherefore, that which put all the deſign of this eternal love of the Father into execution, and wrought out the accompliſhment of it, was *the love of the Son*, which we inquire after; and light may be given unto it in the enſuing obſervations:

1. The whole number or ſociety of the elect, were creatures made in the image of God, and thereby in a ſtate of *love* with him. All that they were, had, or hoped for, were effects of divine goodneſs and love. And the life of their ſouls was *love unto God*. And a bleſſed ſtate it was, preparatory for the eternal *life of love* in heaven.

2. From this ſtate they *fell by ſin*, into a ſtate of *enmity* with

God; which is comprehenſive of all miſeries, temporal and eternal.

3. Notwithſtanding this woful *cataſtrophe* of our firſt ſtate, yet our nature on many accounts was recoverable unto the enjoyment of God, as I have at large elſewhere declared.

4. In this condition, the firſt *act of love* in Chriſt towards us, was in *pity* and *compaſſion*. A creature made in the image of God, and fallen into miſery, yet capable of recovery, is the proper object of *divine compaſſion*. That which is ſo celebrated in the ſcripture, as the *bowels*, the *pity*, the *compaſſion of God*, is the acting of divine love towards us, on the conſideration of our diſtreſs and miſery. But all compaſſion ceaſeth towards them whoſe condition is irrecoverable. Wherefore the Lord Chriſt pitied *not the angels* that fell, becauſe their nature was not to be relieved. Of this *compaſſion* in Chriſt, ſee Heb. ii. 14, 15, 16. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* Iſa. lxiii. 9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his preſence ſaved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.*

5. As then we lay under the eye of Chriſt in our *miſery*, we were the objects of his *pity* and *compaſſion*: but as he looketh on us as *recoverable* out of that ſtate, his *love* worketh in and by *delight*. It was an inconceivable *delight* unto him, to take a proſpect of the deliverance of mankind unto the glory of God, which is alſo an act of love. This is divinely expreſſed, Prov. viii. 30, 31. *Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men.* As it hath been elſewhere explained.

6. If it be inquired, whence this *compaſſion* and *delight* in him ſhould ariſe, what ſhould be the cauſe of them; that he who was eternally bleſſed in his own ſelf-ſufficiency, ſhould ſo deeply concern himſelf in our loſt forlorn condition? I ſay it did ſo, merely from the *infinite love* and goodneſs of his own nature, without the leaſt procuring inducement from us, or any thing in us, Tit. iii. 5. *Not by works of righteouſneſs, which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.*

7. In this his readineſs, willingneſs, and delight, ſpringing

from love and compaſſion, the *counſel* of God concerning the way of our recovery, is as it were propoſed unto him. Now this was a *way* of great difficulties and perplexities unto himſelf; that is, unto his perſon as it was to be conſtituted. Unto the divine nature nothing is grievous, nothing is difficult: but he was to have *another* nature, wherein he was to undergo the difficulties of this way and work. It was required of him, that he ſhould *pity us*, until he had none left to pity himſelf when he ſtood in need of it; that he ſhould purſue his *delight* to ſave us, until his own *ſoul was heavy* and ſorrowful unto death; that he ſhould relieve us in our *ſufferings*, by *ſuffering* the ſame things that we ſhould have done. But he was not in the leaſt hereby deterred from undertaking this work of love and mercy for us; yea his love roſe on this propoſal, like the waters of a mighty ſtream againſt oppoſition. For hereon he ſays, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*, it is my *delight* to do it, Heb. x. 5, 6, 7. Iſa. l. 5, 6, 7. *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

8. Being thus inclined, diſpoſed, and ready in the eternal love of his divine perſon, to undertake the office of mediation, and the work of our redemption; a body was *prepared* for him. In this body or human nature made his *own*, he was to make this love effectual in all its inclinations and actings. It was provided for him unto this end, and filled with all grace in a way *unmeaſurable*, eſpecially with *fervent love* unto mankind. And hereby it became a meet inſtrument, to actuate his eternal love in all the fruits of it.

9. It is hence evident, that this *glorious love of Chriſt* doth not conſiſt alone in the *eternal actings of his divine perſon*, or the divine nature in his perſon: ſuch indeed is the *love of the Father*, namely, his eternal purpoſe for the communication of grace and glory, with his acquieſcency therein: but there is more in the love of Chriſt; for when he exerciſed this love, he was man alſo, and not God only. And in none of thoſe eternal acts of love could the human nature of Chriſt have any intereſt or concern; yet is the love of the man Chriſt Jeſus, celebrated in the ſcripture.

10. Wherefore this love of Chriſt which we inquire after, is the *love of his perſon*, that is, which he in his own perſon acts in and by his diſtinct natures, according unto their diſtinct eſſential properties. And the acts of love in theſe diſtinct natures, are infinite, diſtinct, and different; yet are they all acts

of *one* and the *ſame perſon*. So then, whether that act of love in Chriſt, which we would at any time conſider, be an eternal act of the *divine* nature in the perſon of the Son of God; or whether it be an act of the *human*, performed in time by the gracious faculties and powers of that nature, it is ſtill the *love of one and the ſelf-ſame perſon, Chriſt Jeſus*.

It was an act of inexpreſſible love in him, that he *aſſumed our nature*, Heb. ii. 14. 17. But it was an act in and of his divine nature only; for it was antecedent unto the exiſtence of his human nature, which could not therefore concur therein. His *laying down his life* for us, was an act of inconceivable love, 1 John iii. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us*. Yet was it only an act of the human *nature*, wherein he offered himſelf and died. But both the one and the other were acts of his *divine perſon*; whence it is ſaid, that God laid down his life for us, and purchaſed the church with his own blood.

This is that love of Chriſt wherein he is glorious, and wherein we are by faith to behold his glory. A great part of the bleſſedneſs of the ſaints in heaven, and their triumph therein, conſiſts in their *beholding of this glory* of Chriſt, in their thankful contemplation of the fruits of it, Rev. v. 9, 10. *And they ſung a new ſong, ſaying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us unto our God kings and prieſts: and we ſhall reign on the earth*, &c.

The illuſtrious *brightneſs* wherewith this glory ſhines in heaven, the all-ſatisfying *ſweetneſs* which the view of it gives unto the ſouls of the ſaints there poſſeſſed of glory, are not by us conceivable nor to be expreſſed. Here this love *paſſeth knowledge*, there we ſhall comprehend the dimenſions of it. Yet even here, if we are not ſlothful and carnal, we may have a refreſhing proſpect of it; and where comprehenſion fails, let admiration take place.

My preſent buſineſs is to exhort others unto the contemplation of it, though it be but a little, a very little, a ſmall portion of it that I can conceive; and leſs than that very little, that I can expreſs. Yet may it be my duty to excite not only myſelf, but others alſo unto due inquiries after it; unto which end I offer the things enſuing:

1. *Labour that your minds may continually be fitted and prepared for ſuch heavenly contemplations*. If they are carnal and ſenſual, or filled with earthly things, a due ſenſe of this *love of Chriſt*

and its glory, will not abide in them. Virtue and vice in their higheſt degrees, are not more *diametrically* oppoſite and inconſiſtent in the ſame mind, than are an habitual courſe of ſenſual worldly thoughts, and a due contemplation of the glory of the love of Chriſt: yea, an *earneſtneſs of ſpirit*, pregnant with a multitude of thoughts about the lawful occaſions of life, is obſtructive of all due communion with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt herein.

Few there are whoſe minds are *prepared* in a due manner for this duty. The actions and communications of the moſt, evidence what is the inward frame of their ſouls. They rove up and down in their thoughts, which are continually led by their affections into the corners of the earth. It is in vain to call ſuch perſons unto contemplations of the glory of Chriſt in his love. An holy compoſure of mind by virtue of ſpiritual principles, an inclination to ſeek after refreſhment in heavenly things, and to bathe the ſoul in the fountain of them, with conſtant apprehenſions of the excellency of this divine glory, are required hereunto.

2. Be not ſatisfied with *general notions* concerning the love of Chriſt, which repreſent no glory unto the mind; wherewith many deceive themſelves. All who believe his divine perſon, profeſs a valuation of his love, and think them *not Chriſtians* who are otherwiſe minded: but they have only *general notions*, and not any diſtinct conceptions of it, and really know not what it is. To deliver us from this ſnare, peculiar meditations on its principal concerns are required of us. As,

(1.) *Whoſe love it is;* namely, of the divine perſon of the Son of God. He is expreſsly called *God*, with reſpect unto the exerciſe of this love; that we may always conſider whoſe it is, 1 John iii. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.*

(2.) By what *ways* and *means* this wonderful *love* of the Son of God doth act itſelf; namely, in the divine nature, by eternal acts of wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace proper thereunto; and in the human, by temporary acts of pity or compaſſion, with all the fruits of them in doing and ſuffering for us, Eph. iii. 19. *And to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* Heb. ii. 14, 15. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time ſubject*

to bondage. Rev. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood,* &c.

(3.) What is the *freedom* of it, as unto any deſert on our part, 1 John iv. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be a propitiation for our ſins.* It was hatred, not love, that we in ourſelves deſerved, which is a conſideration ſuited to fill the ſoul with ſelf-abaſement, the beſt of frames in the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt.

(4.) What is the *efficacy* of it in its fruits and effects, with ſundry other conſiderations of the like nature. By a diſtinct proſpect and admiration of theſe things, the ſoul may walk in this paradiſe of God, and gather here and there an heavenly flower, conveying unto it a ſweet ſavour of this love of Chriſt, Cant. ii. 2, 3, 4. *As the lily among thorns, ſo is my love among the daughters. As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons. I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte. He brought me to the banqueting-houſe, and his banner over me was love.*

Moreover, be not contented to have *right notions* of the love of Chriſt in your minds, unleſs you can attain a gracious *taſte* of it in your hearts; no more than you would be to ſee a feaſt or banquet richly prepared, and partake of nothing of it unto your refreſhment. It is of that nature that we may have a *ſpiritual ſenſation* of it in our minds; whence it is compared by the ſpouſe to *apples, and flagons of wine.* We may *taſte* that the Lord is gracious: and if we find not a reliſh of it in our hearts, we ſhall not long retain the notion of it in our minds. Chriſt is the meat, the bread, the food of our ſouls. Nothing is in him of an higher ſpiritual nouriſhment than his love, which we ſhould always deſire.

In this love is he *glorious;* for it is ſuch as no creatures, angels or men, could have the leaſt conceptions of, before its manifeſtation by its effects: and after its manifeſtation, it is in this world abſolutely incomprehenſible.

CHAP. VI.

The glory of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his mediatory office.

AS the Lord Chriſt was *glorious* in the *ſuſception* of his office; ſo was he alſo in its *diſcharge.* An unſeen glory accompanied him in all that he did, in all that he ſuffered. *Unſeen* it was unto the eyes of the world, but not in his who alone

can judge of it. Had men ſeen it, they would not have *crucified the Lord of glory.* Yet to ſome of them it was made manifeſt. Hence they teſtified that in the diſcharge of his office, they *beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,* John i. 14. and that when others could ſee neither *form nor comelineſs in him that he ſhould be deſired,* Iſa. liii. 2. And ſo it is at this day. I ſhall only make ſome few obſervations; firſt, on what he did in a *way* of *obedience,* and then on what he *ſuffered* in the diſcharge of his office ſo undertaken by him.

1. *What he did,* what obedience he yielded unto the law of God in the diſcharge of his office, (with reſpect whereunto he ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, yea, thy law is in my heart*), it was all *on his own free choice* or election, and was reſolved thereinto alone It is our duty to endeavour after *freedom, willingneſs,* and chearfulneſs in all our obedience. Obedience hath its formal nature from our *wills.* So much as there is of our *wills,* in what we do towards God, ſo much there is of obedience, and no more. Howbeit, we are *antecedently* unto all acts of our own wills, obliged unto all that is called obedience. From the very conſtitution of our natures, we are neceſſarily ſubject unto the law of God. All that is left unto us, is a voluntary *compliance* with unavoidable commands; with him it was not ſo. An act of his own will and choice *preceded* all obligation as unto obedience. He *obeyed becauſe he would,* before *becauſe he ought.* He ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,* before he was obliged to do that will. By his own choice, and that in an act of infinite condeſcenſion and love, as we have ſhewed, he was *made of a woman,* and thereby *made under the law.* In his divine perſon he was Lord of the law, above it, no more obnoxious unto its commands, than its curſe: Neither was he afterwards in himſelf on his own account unobnoxious unto its curſe, merely becauſe he was *innocent,* but alſo becauſe he was every way above the law itſelf, and all its force.

This was the original glory of his obedience. The wiſdom, the grace, the love, the condeſcenſion that was in this *choice,* animated every act, every duty of his obedience, rendering it amiable in the ſight of God, and uſeful unto us. So when he went unto John to be baptized, he who knew he had no need of it on his own account, would have declined the duty of adminiſtering that ordinance unto him; but he replied, *Suffer it to be ſo now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs,* Matth. iii. 15. This I have undertaken *willingly* of my own accord, without any need of it for myſelf, and therefore

will diſcharge it. For him who was *Lord* of all univerſally, thus to ſubmit himſelf to univerſal obedience, carrieth along with it an evidence of glorious grace.

2. This obedience as unto the *uſe and end* of it, was not for himſelf, but *for us*. We were obliged unto it, and could not perform it; he was not obliged unto it any otherwiſe but by a free act of his own will, and did perform it. God give him this honour, that he ſhould obey for the whole church, that by *his obedience we ſhould be made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. Herein, I ſay, did God give him honour and glory, that his obedience ſhould ſtand in the ſtead of the perfect obedience of the church as unto juſtification.

3. His obedience being abſolutely *univerſal*, and abſolutely *perfect*, was the great repreſentative of the holineſs of God in the law. It was repreſented glorious when the *ten words* were written by the finger of God in tables of ſtone: it appears yet more eminently in the ſpiritual tranſcription of it in the hearts of believers: but abſolutely and perfectly it is exemplified only in the holineſs and obedience of Chriſt, which anſwered it unto the utmoſt. And this is no ſmall part of his glory in obedience, that the holineſs of God in the law was therein, and therein alone in that one inſtance, as unto human nature, fully repreſented.

4. He wrought out this obedience againſt all *difficulties and oppreſſions*. For although he was abſolutely free from that diſorder which in us hath invaded our whole natures, which internally renders all obedience difficult unto us, and perfect obedience impoſſible; yet as unto oppoſition from without, in *temptations*, *ſufferings*, *reproaches*, contradictions, he met with more than we all. Hence is that glorious word, *Although he were a Son, yet he learned obedience, by the things which he ſuffered*, Heb. v. 8. See our expoſition of this place. But,

5. The glory of this obedience ariſeth principally from the conſideration of the *perſon*, who thus yielded it unto God. This was no other but the Son of God made man; God and man in one perſon. He who was in heaven, above all, Lord of all, at the ſame time lived in the world in a condition of no reputation, and a courſe of the ſtricteſt obedience unto the whole law of God. He unto whom prayer was made, prayed himſelf night and day. He whom all the angels of heaven, and all the creatures worſhipped, was continually converſant in all the duties of the worſhip of God. He who was over the houſe, diligently obſerved the meaneſt office of the houſe. He that made all men, in whoſe hand they are as clay in the

hand of the potter, obſerved amongſt them the ſtricteſt rules of *juſtice*, in giving unto every one his due, and of *charity*, in giving good things that were not ſo due. This is that which renders the obedience of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office, both myſterious and glorious.

2*dly*, Again, the glory of Chriſt is propoſed unto us in what he *ſuffered* in the diſcharge of the office which he had undertaken. There belonged indeed unto his office, victory, ſucceſs, and triumph with great glory, Iſa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength? I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have traden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood ſhall be ſprinkled upon my garments, and I will ſtain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought ſalvation unto me, and my fury, it upheld me.* But there were *ſufferings* alſo required of him antecedently thereunto. *Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer and to enter into his glory?*

But ſuch were theſe *ſufferings of Chriſt*, as that in our thoughts about them, our minds quickly recoil in a ſenſe of their inſufficiency to conceive a-right of them: never any one launched into this ocean with his meditations, but he quickly found himſelf unable to fathom the depths of it: nor ſhall I here undertake an inquiry into them. I ſhall only point at this ſpring of glory, and leave it under a vail.

We might here look on him as under the *weight* of the wrath of God, and the curſe of the law; taking on himſelf, and on his whole ſoul, the utmoſt of evil that God had ever threatened to ſin, or ſinners: we might look on him in his *agony* and bloody ſweat, in his ſtrong cries and ſupplications, when he was ſorrowful unto the death, and *began to be amazed*, in apprehenſions of the things that were coming on him; of that dreadful *trial* which he was entering into: we might look upon him, conflicting with all the *powers of darkneſs*, the rage and madneſs of men; ſuffering in his ſoul, his body, his name, his reputation, his goods, his life; ſome of theſe ſufferings being immediate from God above, others from devils and wicked men, acting according to the determinate counſel of God: we might look on him *praying*, *weeping*, *crying out*, bleeding,

dying, in all things making his ſoul an offering for ſin. So was he taken from priſon and judgment, and who ſhall declare his generation? for he was cut off from the land of the living; *for the tranſgreſſion* (ſaith God) *of my people was he ſmitten*, Iſa. liii. 8. But theſe things I ſhall not inſiſt on in particular, but leave them under ſuch a vail as may give us a proſpect into them, ſo far as to fill our ſouls with holy admiration.

Lord, what is man that thou art thus mindful of him! and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him! Who hath known thy mind, or who hath been thy counſeller? O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out! What ſhall we ſay unto theſe things? that God ſpared not his only Son, but gave him up unto death, and all the evils included therein, for ſuch poor loſt ſinners as we are; that for our ſakes the eternal Son of God ſhould ſubmit himſelf unto all the evils that our natures are obnoxious unto, and that our ſins had deſerved, that we might be delivered?

How *glorious* is the Lord Chriſt on this account in the eyes of believers! When Adam had ſinned, and thereby eternally, according unto the ſanction of the law, ruined himſelf and all his poſterity, he ſtood aſhamed, afraid, trembling as one ready to periſh for ever under the diſpleaſure of God. *Death* was that which he deſerved, and *immediate death* was that which he looked for. In this ſtate the Lord Chriſt in the promiſe comes unto him, and ſays, *Poor creature!* how woful is thy condition! how *deformed* is thy appearance! what is become of the beauty, of the glory of that *image* of God wherein thou waſt created? how haſt thou taken on thee the monſtrous ſhape and image of Satan? And yet thy preſent miſery, thy entrance into duſt and darkneſs, is no way to be compared with what is to enſue; eternal *diſtreſs* lies at the door. But yet look up once more, and *behold me*, that thou mayſt have ſome glimpſe of what is in the deſigns of infinite wiſdom, love, and grace; come forth from thy vain *ſhelter*, thy hiding-place; I will put myſelf into thy condition; I will undergo and bear that burden of guilt and puniſhment, which would ſink thee eternally into the bottom of hell. I will *pay that which I never took*; and be made *temporally* a curſe for thee, that thou mayſt attain unto *eternal* bleſſedneſs. To the ſame purpoſe he ſpeaks unto convinced ſinners, in the invitation he gives them to come unto him.

Thus is the Lord Chriſt ſet forth in the *goſpel*, *evidently crucified before our eyes*, Gal. iii. 1. namely, in the repreſentation

that is made of his glory, in the *ſuffering* he underwent for the diſcharge of the office he had undertaken. Let us then behold him as poor, deſpiſed, perſecuted, reproached, reviled, *hanged on a tree*; in all, labouring under a ſenſe of the *wrath of God* due unto our ſins. Unto this end are they recorded in the goſpel, read, preached, and repreſented unto us. But what can we ſee herein? what glory is in theſe things? Are not theſe the things which all the world of Jews and Gentiles ſtumbled and took offence at? thoſe wherein he was appointed to be a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence?* Was it not eſteemed *a fooliſh thing* to look for help and deliverance by the miſeries of another? to look for life by his death? The apoſtle declares at large that ſuch it was eſteemed, 1 Cor. i. So was it in the wiſdom of the world. But even on the account of theſe things is he honourable, glorious, and precious in the ſight of them that do believe, 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. For even herein he was the *wiſdom of God, and the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. And the apoſtle declares at large, the grounds and reaſons of the different thoughts and apprehenſions of men, concerning the croſs and ſufferings of Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

CHAP. VII.

The glory of Chriſt in his exaltation, after the accompliſhment of the work of mediation in this world.

WE may in the next place behold the glory of Chriſt with reſpect unto his office, in the actings of God towards him, which enſued on his diſcharge of it in this world, in his *own exaltation.*

Theſe are the two heads, whereunto all the propheſies and predictions concerning Jeſus Chriſt under the Old Teſtament are referred, namely his *ſufferings*, and the *glory* that enſued thereon, 1 Pet. i. 11. *All the prophets teſtified before-hand of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow.* So when he himſelf *opened the ſcriptures* unto his diſciples, he gave them this as the ſum of the doctrine contained in them; *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?*

Luke xxiv. 26. The ſame is frequently expreſſed elſewhere, Rom. xiv. 9. Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8.

So much as we know of Chriſt, his ſufferings and his glory; ſo much do we underſtand of the ſcripture, and no more.

Theſe are the two heads of the mediation of Chriſt and his kingdom; and this is their order which they communicate unto the church; firſt *ſufferings*, and then *glory*: *If we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him*, 2 Tim. ii. 12. They do but deceive themſelves, who deſign any other *method* of theſe things. Some would *reign* here in this world; and we may ſay with the apoſtle, *Would you did reign, that we might reign with you.* But the members of the myſtical body muſt be *conformed* unto the Head. In him ſufferings went before glory, and ſo they muſt in them. The order in the kingdom of Satan and the world, is contrary hereunto. Firſt, the *good things* of this life, and then *eternal miſery*, is the method of that kingdom, Luke xvi. 25. *But Abraham ſaid, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedſt thy good things, and likewiſe Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

Theſe are the two ſprings of the ſalvation of the church; the two *anointed ones* that ſtand before the Lord of the whole earth; from which all the *golden oil* whereby the church is dedicated unto God, and ſanctified, doth flow. This glory of Chriſt in his *exaltation* which followed on his ſufferings, is that which we now inquire into. And we ſhall ſtate our apprehenſions of it in the enſuing obſervations:

1. This is peculiarly *that glory* which the Lord Chriſt prays that his diſciples may be where he is, to behold it. It is not ſolely ſo, as it is conſidered abſolutely; but it is that, wherein all the other parts of his glory are made manifeſt. It is the evidence, the pledge, the means of the manifeſtation of them all. As unto all the inſtances of his glory before inſiſted on, there was a vail drawn over them whilſt he was in this world. Hence the moſt ſaw *nothing* of it, and the beſt ſaw it but *obſcurely*. But in this glory that vail is taken off, whereby the whole glory of his perſon in itſelf, and in the work of mediation is moſt illuſtriouſly manifeſted. When we ſhall immediately behold this glory, we ſhall ſee him as he is. This is that glory whereof the Father *made grant* unto him before the foundation of the world, and wherewith he was actually inveſted upon his aſcenſion.

2. By this glory of Chriſt, I do not underſtand the *eſſential glory* of his divine nature; or his being abſolutely in his own perſon over all *God bleſſed for ever*; but the manifeſtation of

this glory in particular, after it had been *vailed* in this world under the *form of a ſervant*, belongs hereunto. The divine glory of Chriſt in his perſon belongs not unto his exaltation; but the manifeſtation of it doth ſo. It was not given him by *free donation*; but the declaration of it unto the church of angels and men after his humiliation was ſo. He left it not whilſt he was in this world; but the direct evidence and declaration of it he *laid aſide*, until he was *declared to be the Son of God with power*, by the reſurrection from the dead.

When the ſun is under a total eclipſe, he loſeth nothing of his native beauty, light, and glory: he is ſtill the ſame that he was from the beginning; a *great light to rule the day*. To us he appears as a dark uſeleſs *meteor*, but when he comes by his courſe to free himſelf from the *lunar interpoſition* unto his proper aſpect towards us, he manifeſts again his native light and glory. So was it with the divine nature of Chriſt, as we have before declared. He *vailed* the *glory* of it by the interpoſition of the fleſh, or the aſſumption of our nature to be his *own*, with this addition, that therein he took on him the *form of a ſervant*, of a perſon of mean and low degree. But this temporary *eclipſe* being paſt and over, it now ſhines forth in its infinite luſtre and beauty, which belongs unto the preſent *exaltation* of his perſon. And when thoſe who beheld him here as a poor, ſorrowful, perſecuted man, dying on the croſs, came to ſee him in all the infinite increated glories of the divine nature, manifeſting themſelves in his perſon, it could not but fill their ſouls with tranſcendent joy and admiration. And this is one reaſon of his *prayer* for them whilſt he was on the earth, that they *might be where he is to behold his glory*. For he knew what ineffable ſatisfaction it would be unto them for evermore.

3. I do not underſtand abſolutely the *glorification of the human nature of Chriſt*, that very ſoul and body wherein he lived and died, ſuffered and roſe again, though that alſo be included herein. This alſo were a ſubject meet for our contemplation, eſpecially as it is the *exemplar* of that glory which he will bring all thoſe unto, who believe in him. But becauſe at preſent we look ſomewhat further, I ſhall obſerve only one or two things concerning it.

(1.) *That very nature itſelf* which he took on him in this world, is exalted into glory. Some under a pretence of great ſubtilty and accuracy, do deny that he hath either fleſh or blood in heaven, that is, as to the ſubſtance of them; however you may ſuppoſe that they are changed, purified, glorified. The great

foundation of the church, and all goſpel faith is, that he was *made fleſh*, that he did partake of fleſh and blood, even as did the children. That he hath forſaken that *fleſh and blood* which he was *made* in the womb of the bleſſed virgin, wherein he lived and died, which he offered unto God in ſacrifice, and wherein he roſe from the dead, is a Socinian fiction. What is the true nature of the glorification of the *humanity* of Chriſt, neither thoſe who thus ſurmiſe, nor we can perfectly comprehend. It doth not yet appear what we ourſelves ſhall be, much leſs is it evident unto us what he is, whom we ſhall be like. But that he is ſtill in the ſame *human nature*, wherein he was on the earth, that he hath the ſame rational ſoul, and the ſame body, is a fundamental article of the Chriſtian faith.

(2.) This nature of the man Chriſt Jeſus, is *filled with all the divine graces and perfections* whereof a limited created nature is capable. It is not *deified*, it is not made a God; it doth not in heaven coaleſce into one nature with the divine by a compoſition of them; it hath not any eſſential property of the Deity communicated unto it, ſo as ſubjectively to reſide in it; it is not made *omniſcient*, *omnipreſent*, *omnipotent*: but it is exalted in a fulneſs of all divine perfection ineffably above the glory of angels and men. It is incomprehenſibly nearer God than they all; hath communications from God, in glorious light, love, and power, ineffably above them all. But it is ſtill a creature.

For the *ſubſtance* of this glory of the human nature of Chriſt, believers ſhall be made partakers of it; for when we *ſee him as he is*, we ſhall *be like him*; but as unto the degrees and meaſures of it, his glory is above all that we can be made partakers of: *There is one glory of the ſun, another of the moon and ſtars, and one ſtar differeth from another in glory*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Cor. xv. 41. And if there be a difference in glory among the *ſtars* themſelves, as to ſome degrees of the ſame glory; how much more is there between the glory of the *ſun*, and that of any *ſtar* whatever? Such is the difference that is and will be unto eternity between the human nature of Chriſt, and what glorified believers do attain unto. But yet this is not that properly wherein the glory of Chriſt in his *exaltation*, after his humiliation and death, doth conſiſt. The things that belong unto it may be reduced unto the enſuing heads:

1. It conſiſteth in the *exaltation* of the human nature, as ſubſiſting in the divine perſon, above the whole creation of God, in power, dignity, authority, and rule, with all things that the wiſdom of God hath appointed to render the glory of

it illuſtrious. I have ſo largely inſiſted on the explication and confirmation of this part of the preſent glory of Chriſt, in the expoſition of Heb. i. 2, 3. that I have nothing more to add thereunto.

2. It doth ſo in the *evidence given* of the infinite *love of God the Father unto him*, and his delight in him, with the eternal approbation of his diſcharge of the office committed unto him. Hence he is ſaid *to ſight at the right hand of God*, or at the *right hand of the Majeſty on high*. That the glory and dignity of Chriſt in his exaltation is *ſingular*, the higheſt that can be given to a creature, incomprehenſible; he is with reſpect unto the diſcharge of his office, under the eternal approbation of God; that as ſo glorioufly exalted, he is proclaimed unto the whole creation, are all contained in this expreſſion.

3. Hereunto is added the full *manifeſtation* of his own divine wiſdom, love, and grace in the work of mediation and redemption of the church. This glory is abſolutely ſingular and peculiar unto him. Neither *angels* or *men* have the leaſt intereſt in it. Here we ſee it darkly in a glaſs; above, it ſhines forth in its brightneſs, to the eternal joy of them who behold him.

This is that glory which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in an eſpecial manner *prayed* that his diſciples might behold. This is that whereof we ought to endeavour a proſpect by *faith*. By *faith*, I ſay, and not by *imagination*. Vain and fooliſh men having general notions of this *glory of Chriſt*, knowing nothing of the real nature of it, have endeavoured to repreſent it in *pictures* and *images*, with all that luſtre and beauty which the art of painting, the ornaments of gold and jewels, can give them. This is that repreſentation of the preſent glory of Chriſt, which being made and propoſed unto the imagination and carnal affections of ſuperſtitious perſons, carrieth ſuch a ſhew of devotion and veneration in the Papal church. But they err not knowing the ſcripture, nor the eternal glory of the Son of God.

This is the ſole foundation of all our meditations herein. The glory that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is in the real actual poſſeſſion of in heaven, can be no otherwiſe ſeen or apprehended in this world, but in the *light of faith*, fixing itſelf on divine revelation. To behold this glory of Chriſt is not an act of *fancy* or imagination. It doth not conſiſt in *framing* unto ourſelves the ſhape of a glorious perſon in heaven. But the ſteady exerciſe of faith on the *revelation* and *deſcription* made of this glory of Chriſt in the ſcripture, is the ground, rule and meaſure of all divine meditations thereon.

Hereon our duty it is, *to call ourſelves to an account*, as unto our endeavour after a gracious view of this glory of Chriſt: when did we ſtedfaſtly behold it? when had we ſuch a view of it as wherein our ſouls have been ſatisfied and refreſhed? It is declared and repreſented unto us as one of the chief props of our faith, as an help of our joy, as an object of our hope, as a ground of our conſolation, as our greateſt encouragement unto obedience and ſuffering. Are our minds every day converſant with thoughts hereof? or do we think ourſelves not much concerned herein? do we look upon it, as that which is without us and above us, as that which we ſhall have time enough to conſider when we come to heaven? So is it with many. They care neither *where* Chriſt is, nor *what* he is, ſo that one way or other they may be ſaved by him. They hope, as they pretend, that they ſhall ſee him and his glory in heaven, and that they ſuppoſe to be time enough. But in vain do they pretend a deſire thereof; in vain are their expectations of any ſuch thing. They who endeavour not to behold the glory of Chriſt in this world, as hath been often ſaid, ſhall never behold him in glory hereafter unto their ſatisfaction; nor do they deſire ſo to do; only they ſuppoſe it a part of that *relief* which they would have when they are gone out of this world. For what ſhould beget ſuch a deſire in them? Nothing can do it, but ſome view of it here by faith, which they deſpiſe, or totally neglect. Every pretence of a *deſire of heaven*, and of the preſence of Chriſt therein, that doth not ariſe from, that is not reſolved into that proſpect which we have of the glory of Chriſt in this world by faith, is mere *fancy* and imagination.

Our conſtant exerciſe in *meditation* on this glory of Chriſt will fill us with *joy* on his account, which is an effectual motive unto the duty itſelf. We are for the moſt part *ſelfiſh*, and look no farther than our own concernments. So we may be pardoned and ſaved by him, we care not much how it is with himſelf, but only preſume it is well enough. We find not any concernment of our own therein. But this frame is directly oppoſite unto the *genius* of divine faith and love. For their principal actings conſiſt in preferring Chriſt above ourſelves; and our concerns in him above all our own. Let this then ſtir us up unto the contemplation of this glory. Who is it that is thus exalted over all? who is thus encompaſſed with glory, majeſty, and power? who is it that ſits down at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, all his enemies being made his footſtool? Is it not he, who in this world, was poor, deſpiſed,

perſecuted and ſlain, all for our ſakes? is it not the ſame *Jeſus* who loved us, and gave himſelf for us, and waſhed us in his own blood? So the apoſtle told the Jews, that the *ſame Jeſus whom they ſlew and hanged on a tree, God had exalted with his right hand to be a Saviour, to give repentance unto Iſrael, and the forgiveneſs of ſins*, Acts v. 30, 31. If we have any valuation of his love, if we have any concernment in what he hath done and ſuffered for the church, we cannot but rejoice in his preſent ſtate and glory.

Let the world rage whilſt it pleaſeth; let it ſet itſelf with all its power and craft againſt every thing of Chriſt that is in it; which, whatever is by ſome otherwiſe pretended, proceeds from an hatred unto his perſon; let men make themſelves drunk with the blood of his ſaints, we have this to oppoſe unto all their attempts, unto our ſupportment, namely, what he ſays of himſelf; *Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt, he that liveth and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore and have the keys of hell and death*, Rev. i. 17, 18.

Bleſſed Jeſus! we can add nothing to thee, nothing to thy glory; but it is *a joy of heart unto us, that thou art what thou art*; that thou art ſo gloriouſly exalted at the right hand of God; and do long more fully and clearly to behold that glory, according to thy prayer and promiſe.

CHAP. VIII.

Repreſentations of the glory of Chriſt under the Old Teſtament.

IT is ſaid of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *That beginning at Moſes, and all the prophets, he declared unto his diſciples in all the ſcriptures the things concerning himſelf*, Luke xxiv. 27. It is therefore manifeſt, that Moſes and the prophets, and all the ſcriptures do give teſtimony unto him and his glory. This is the line of life and light, which runs through the whole Old Teſtament; without the conduct whereof we can underſtand nothing aright therein: and the neglect hereof, is that which makes many as blind in reading the books of it, as are the Jews, the ſame vail being upon their minds. It is *faith* alone, diſcovering the glory of Chriſt, that can remove that *vail* of darkneſs which covers the minds of men in reading the *Old Teſtament*, as the apoſtle declares, 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15, 16. *But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame vail untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament; which*

vail is done away in Chriſt. But even unto this day, when Moſes is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the vail ſhall be taken away. I ſhall therefore conſider briefly ſome of thoſe ways and means whereby the glory of Chriſt was repreſented unto believers under the Old Teſtament.

1. It was ſo in the inſtitution of the *beautiful worſhip of the law*, with all the means of it. Herein have they the advantage above all the ſplendid *ceremonies* that men can invent, in the outward worſhip of God; they were deſigned and framed in divine wiſdom to repreſent the glory of Chriſt in his perſon and his office. This nothing of human invention can do, or once pretend unto. Men cannot create *myſteries*, nor give unto any thing natural in itſelf, a *myſtical* ſignification. But ſo it was in the old divine inſtitutions. What were the tabernacle and temple? what was the *holy place*, with the utenſils of it? what was the oracle, the ark, the cherubims, the mercy-ſeat placed therein? what was the high prieſt in all his veſtments and adminiſtrations? what were the ſacrifices and annual ſprinkling of blood in the moſt holy place? what was the moſt whole *ſyſtem* of their religious worſhip? were they any thing but repreſentations of Chriſt in the glory of his perſon and his office? they were a *ſhadow*, and the body repreſented by that ſhadow, was Chriſt. If any would ſee how the Lord Chriſt was in particular foreſignified and repreſented in them, he may peruſe our *expoſition on the ninth chapter of the epiſtle unto the Hebrews*, where it is handled ſo at large, as that I ſhall not here again inſiſt upon it. The ſum is, *Moſes was faithful in all the houſe of God, for a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken afterwards*, Heb. iii. 5. All that Moſes did in the erection of the tabernacle, and the inſtitution of all its ſervices, was but to give an *antecedent teſtimony*, by way of repreſentation, unto the things of Chriſt that were *afterwards* to be revealed. And that alſo was the ſubſtance of the miniſtry of the *prophets*, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into.* The dark apprehenſions of the glory of Chriſt which by theſe means they obtained, were the life of the church of old.

2. It was repreſented in the *myſtical account* which is given

us of his communion with his church in love and grace. As this is intimated in many places of ſcripture; ſo there is one *entire book* deſigned unto its declaration. This is the *divine Song of Solomon*, who was a type of Chriſt, and a penman of the Holy Ghoſt therein. A gracious record it is of the divine communications of Chriſt in love and grace unto his church, with their returns of love unto him, and delight in him. And then may a man judge himſelf to have ſomewhat profited in the experience of the myſtery of a bleſſed intercourſe and communion with Chriſt, when the expreſſions of them in that holy *dialogue*, do give light and life unto his mind, and efficaciouſly communicate unto him an experience of their power. But becauſe theſe things are little underſtood by many, the *book* itſelf is much neglected, if not deſpiſed. Yea to ſuch impudence have ſome arrived, in foaming out their own ſhame, as that they have ridiculed the expreſſions of it; but we are foretold of ſuch *mockers* in the laſt days, that ſhould *walk* after *their own ungodly luſts*; they are not of our preſent conſideration.

The former inſtance of the repreſentations of the glory of Chriſt in their inſtitutions of *outward worſhip*, with this record of the *inward communion* they had with Chriſt in grace, faith, and love, gives us the ſubſtance of that view which they had of his glory. What holy ſtrains of delight and admiration, what raptures of joy, what ſolemn and divine complacency, what ardency of affection, and diligence in attendance unto the means of enjoying communion with him, this diſcovery of the glory of Chriſt wrought in the ſouls of them that did believe, is *emphatically* expreſſed in that diſcourſe. A few days, a few hours ſpent in the frame characteriſed in it, is a bleſſedneſs excelling all the treaſures of the earth; and if we, whoſe revelations of the ſame glory do far exceed theirs, ſhould be found to come ſhort of them in ardency of affection unto Chriſt, and continual holy admiration of his excellencies, we ſhall one day be judged unworthy to have received them.

3. It was ſo repreſented and made known under the Old Teſtament, in his *perſonal appearances* on various occaſions unto ſeveral eminent perſons, leaders of the church in their generations. This he did as a *præludium* to his incarnation. He was as yet God only; but appeared in the aſſumed ſhape of a *man*, to ſignify what he would be. He did not *create an human nature*, and unite it unto himſelf for ſuch a ſeaſon; only by his divine power he acted the ſhape of a man, compoſed of what *ætherial ſubſtance* he pleaſed, immediately to be diſſolved. So

he appeared to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moſes, to Joſhua, and others, as I have at large elſewhere proved and confirmed. And hereon alſo, becauſe he was the divine perſon who dwelt in, and dealt with the church under the Old Teſtament from firſt to laſt, in ſo doing, he conſtantly aſſumes unto himſelf *human affections*, to intimate that a ſeaſon would come, when he would immediately act in that nature. And indeed after the fall, there is nothing ſpoken of God in the Old Teſtament, nothing of his inſtitutions, nothing of the way and manner of dealing with the church, but what hath reſpect unto the *future incarnation of Chriſt*. And it had been abſurd to bring in God under perpetual *anthropopathis*, as grieving, repenting, being angry, well pleaſed, and the like, were it not but that the divine perſon intended, was to take on him the nature wherein ſuch affections do dwell.

4. It was repreſented in *prophetical viſions*. So the apoſtle affirms that the viſion which Iſaiah had of him was, when *he ſaw his glory*, John xii. 41. And it was a bleſſed repreſentation thereof; for his divine perſon being exalted on a *throne of glory*, his *train* filled the temple. The *whole train* of his glorious grace filled the temple of his body. This is the *true tabernacle* which God pitched, and not man; the *temple* which was deſtroyed, and which he raiſed again in three days, wherein dwelt the fulneſs of the Godhead, Col. i. 19. This glory was now preſented unto the view of Iſaiah, chap. vi. 1. 5. which filled him with dread and aſtoniſhment. But from thence he was relieved, by an act of the miniſtry of that *glorious* One, taking away his iniquity by *a coal from the altar*, which typified the purifying efficacy of his ſacrifice. This was food for the ſouls of believers; in theſe and on the like occaſions, did the whole church lift up their voice in that holy cry, *Make haſte our beloved, and be thou like a roe, or to a young hart on the mountains of ſpices.*

Of the ſame nature was his glorious appearance on mount Sinai, at the giving of the law, Exod. xix.; for the deſcription thereof by the pſalmiſt, Pſal. lxviii. 17, 18, is applied by the apoſtle unto the *aſcenſion of Chriſt* after his reſurrection, Eph. iv. 8. *Wherefore he ſaith, When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* Only as it was then full of outward terror, becauſe of the giving of the *fiery law*, it was referred unto by the pſalmiſt, as full of mercy, with reſpect unto his accompliſhment of the ſame law. His *giving* of it was as death unto them concerned, becauſe of its holineſs, and the ſeverity of the curſe wherewith it was at-

tended; his *fulfilling* of it was *life*, by the pardon and righteouſneſs which iſſued from thence.

5. The doctrine of his *incarnation*, whereby he became the ſubject of all that glory which we inquire after, was revealed, although not ſo clearly as by the goſpel, after the actual accompliſhment of the thing itſelf. In how many places this is done in the Old Teſtament, I have elſewhere declared; at leaſt I have explained and vindicated many of them, (for no man can preſume to know them all), *Vindic. Evan.* One inſtance therefore ſhall here ſuffice, and this is that of the ſame prophet Iſaiah, chap. ix. 6, 7. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſeller, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgment and with juſtice, from henceforth even for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hoſts will perform this.* This one teſtimony is ſufficient to confound all Jews, Socinians, and other enemies of the glory of Chriſt. I do acknowledge, that notwithſtanding this declaration of the glory of Chriſt, in his future incarnation and rule, there remained much darkneſs in the minds of them unto whom it was then made. For although they might and did acquieſce in the truth of the revelation, yet they could frame to themſelves no notions of the way or manner of its accompliſhment. But now when every word of it is explained, declared, and its myſtical ſenſe viſibly laid open unto us in the goſpel, and the accompliſhment exactly anſwering every expreſſion in it, it is judicial blindneſs not to receive it. Nothing but the *Satanical pride* of the hearts of men, which will admit of no effects of infinite wiſdom, but what they ſuppoſe they can comprehend, can ſhut their eyes againſt the light of this truth.

6. *Promiſes, prophecies, predictions*, concerning his perſon, his coming, his office, his kingdom, and his glory in them all, with the wiſdom, grace and love of God to the church in him, are the line of life, as was ſaid, which runs through all the writings of the Old Teſtament, and take up a great portion of them. Thoſe were the things which he expounded unto his diſciples out of *Moſes and all the prophets*. Concerning theſe things he appealed to the *ſcriptures* againſt all his adverſaries; *Search the ſcriptures, for they are they that teſtify of me.* And if we find them not, if we diſcern them not therein, it is becauſe a vail of blindneſs is over our minds. Nor can we read, ſtudy, or meditate on

the writings of the Old Teſtament unto any advantage, unleſs we deſign to find out and behold the glory of Chriſt declared and repreſented in them. For want hereof, they are a *ſealed book* to many unto this day.

7. It is uſual in the Old Teſtament, to ſet out the glory of Chriſt under *metaphorical expreſſions*: yea it aboundeth therein. For ſuch *alluſions* are exceedingly ſuited to let in a ſenſe into our minds of thoſe things which we cannot diſtinctly comprehend. And there is an infinite condeſcenſion of divine wiſdom in their way of inſtruction, repreſenting unto us the power of things ſpiritual, in what we naturally diſcern. Inſtances of this kind, in calling the Lord Chriſt by the names of thoſe creatures, which unto our ſenſes repreſent that excellency which is ſpiritually in him, are innumerable. So he is called the *Roſe*, for the ſweet ſavour of his love, grace and obedience; the *Lily*, for his gracious beauty and amiableneſs; the *Pearl* of price, for his worth, for to them that believe he is precious; the *Vine*, for his fruitfulneſs; the *Lion*, for his power; the *Lamb* for his meekneſs and fitneſs for ſacrifice, with other things of the like kind almoſt innumerable.

Theſe things have I mentioned, not with any deſign to ſearch into the depth of this treaſury of thoſe divine truths concerning the glory of Chriſt; but only to give a little light unto the words of the evangeliſt, that he *opened unto his diſciples, out of Moſes, and all the prophets, the things which concerned himſelf*: and to ſtir up our own ſouls unto a contemplation of them as contained therein.

CHAP. IX.

The glory of Chriſt in his intimate conjunction with the church.

WHAT concerns the glory of Chriſt in the *miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt* unto the church, with all the divine truths that are branched from it, I have at large declared in my diſcourſe concerning the *whole diſpenſation of the Holy Spirit*. Here therefore it muſt have no place amongſt thoſe many other things which offer themſelves unto our contemplation, as part of this glory, or intimately belonging thereunto. I ſhall inſiſt briefly on *three* only, which cannot be reduced directly unto the former heads.

And the firſt of theſe is, *that intimate conjunction that is between Chriſt and the church*; whence it is juſt and equal in the

ſight of God, according unto the rules of his eternal righteouſneſs, that what he did and ſuffered in the diſcharge of his office, ſhould be eſteemed, reckoned, and imputed unto us, as unto all the fruits and benefits of it, as if we had done and ſuffered the ſame things ourſelves. For this *conjunction* of his with us, was an act of his own mind and will, wherein he is ineffably glorious.

The *enemies* of the glory of Chriſt and of his croſs, do take this for granted, that there ought to be ſuch a *conjunction* between the *guilty perſon* and him that *ſuffers* for him, as that in him the guilty perſon may be ſaid to be in ſome ſenſe to undergo the puniſhment himſelf. But then they affirm on the other hand, that there was *no ſuch conjunction* between Chriſt and ſinners, none at all; but that he was a *man*, as they were men; and otherwiſe, that he was at the greateſt diſtance from them all, as it is poſſible for one man to be from another, *Socin. de ſervat. lib.* 3. *cap.* 3. The falſeneſs of this latter aſſertion, and the groſs ignorance of the ſcripture under a pretence of *ſubtilty*, in them that make it, will evidently appear in our enſuing diſcourſe.

The apoſtle tells us, 1 Pet. ii. 24. that *in his own ſelf he bare our ſins in his own body on the tree;* and chap. iii. 18. that *he ſuffered for ſin, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us unto God.* But this ſeems ſomewhat ſtrange unto reaſon; where is the juſtice, where is the equity, that the juſt ſhould ſuffer for the unjuſt? where is divine righteouſneſs herein? For it was an act of God, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*, Iſa. liii. 6. The equity hereof, with the grounds of it, muſt be here a little inquired into.

Firſt of all, it is certain that all the elect, the whole church of God, fell in Adam, under the curſe due to the tranſgreſſion of the law. It is ſo alſo, that in this curſe, *death* both *temporal* and *eternal* was contained. This curſe none could undergo and be ſaved. Nor was it conſiſtent with the righteouſneſs, or holineſs, or truth of God, that ſin ſhould go unpuniſhed. Wherefore there was a neceſſity, upon a ſuppoſition of God's decree to ſave his church, of a *tranſlation of puniſhment;* namely, from them who had *deſerved* it, and could not bear it, unto one who had *not* deſerved it, but *could bear it.*

A ſuppoſition of this *tranſlation of puniſhment* by divine diſpenſation, is the foundation of Chriſtian religion, yea of all ſupernatural revelation contained in the ſcripture. This was firſt intimated in the *firſt promiſe;* and afterwards explained and confirmed in all the inſtitutions of the Old Teſtament. For

although in the ſacrifices of the law, there was a revival of the greateſt and moſt fundamental principle of the law of nature, namely, that *God is to be worſhipped with our beſt*, yet the principal end and uſe of them was, to repreſent this *tranſlation of puniſhment* from the offender, unto another who was to be a ſacrifice in his ſtead.

The reaſons of the equity hereof, and the unſpeakable glory of Chriſt herein, is what we now inquire into. And I ſhall reduce what ought to be ſpoken hereunto, to the enſuing heads.

1. It is not *contrary* unto the nature of divine juſtice; it doth not interfere with the principles of natural light in man, that in ſundry caſes *ſome perſons ſhould ſuffer puniſhment for the ſins and offences of others.*

I ſhall at preſent give this aſſertion no other confirmation, but only that God hath often done ſo, who will, who can do no iniquity. So he affirms that he will do, Exod. xx. 5. *Viſiting the ſins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.* It is no exception of weight, that they alſo are ſinners, continuing in their fathers ſins; for the worſt of ſinners muſt not be dealt unjuſtly withal; but they muſt be ſo, if they are puniſhed for their fathers ſins, and it be abſolutely unlawful that any one ſhould be puniſhed for the ſin of another.

So the church affirms; *Our fathers have ſinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities*, Lam. v. 7. And ſo it was: for in the Babyloniſh captivity God puniſhed the ſins of their forefathers, eſpecially thoſe committed in the days of Manaſſeh, 2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27. *Notwithſtanding, the Lord turned not from the fierceneſs of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled againſt Judah, becauſe of all the provocations that Manaſſeh had provoked him withal. And the Lord ſaid, I will remove Judah alſo out of my ſight, as I have removed Iſrael, and will caſt off this city Jeruſalem, which I have choſen, and the houſe of which I ſaid, My name ſhall be there.* As afterwards in the final deſtruction of that church and nation, God puniſhed in them the guilt of all *bloody perſecutions* from the beginning of the world, Luke xi. 50, 51. *That the blood of all the prophets, which was ſhed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which periſhed between the altar and the temple: verily I ſay unto you, it ſhall be required of this generation.*

So Canaan was curſed for the ſin of his father, Gen. ix. 25. *And he ſaid, Curſed be Canaan, a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren.* Saul's ſeven ſons were put to death for their father's bloody cruelty, 2 Sam. xxi. 9. 14. For the ſin of Da-

vid, ſeventy thouſand of the people were deſtroyed by an angel, concerning whom he ſaid, *It is I that have ſinned, and done evil; theſe ſheep what have they done?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. 17. Likewiſe, 1 Kings xxi. 29. *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf before me? becauſe he humbleth himſelf before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his ſons days will I bring the evil upon his houſe.* So was it with all the children or infants that periſhed in the flood, or in the conflagration of Sodom and Gomorrah. And other inſtances of the like nature may be aſſigned.

It is therefore evident, that there is *no inconſiſtency with the nature of divine juſtice*, nor the rules of reaſon among men, that in ſundry caſes the ſins of ſome may be puniſhed on others.

2. It is to be obſerved, that this adminiſtration of juſtice is not promiſcuous, that any whatever may be puniſhed for the ſins of any others. There is always a ſpecial cauſe and reaſon of it; and this is a *peculiar conjunction* between them who ſin, and thoſe who are puniſhed for their ſins. And two things belong unto this conjunction. (1.) Eſpecial *relation.* (2.) Eſpecial *mutual intereſt.*

(1.) There is an eſpecial *relation* required unto this *tranſlation of puniſhment;* ſuch as that between parents and children, as in moſt of the inſtances before given; or between a king and ſubjects, as in the caſe of David. Hereby the perſons ſinning, and thoſe ſuffering, are conſtituted *one body*, wherein if one member offend, another may juſtly ſuffer: the back may anſwer for what the hands take away.

(2.) It conſiſts in *mutual intereſt.* Thoſe whoſe ſins are puniſhed in others, have ſuch an *intereſt* in them, as that their being ſo, is a puniſhment unto themſelves. Therefore are ſuch ſinners threatened with the puniſhment and evils that ſhall befal their poſterity or children for their ſakes, which is highly penal unto themſelves, Numb. xiv. 33. *Your children ſhall wander in the wilderneſs forty years, and bear your whoredoms.* The puniſhment due to their ſins is in part transferred unto their children; and therein did the ſting of their own puniſhment alſo conſiſt.

3. There is a greater, a more *intimate conjunction*, a nearer relation, an higher mutual intereſt *between Chriſt and the church*, than ever was or can be between any other perſons or relations in the world, whereon it became juſt and equal in the ſight of God, that he ſhould ſuffer for us, and that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto us, which is farther to be cleared.

There neither is nor can be any more than a threefold conjunction between diverſe, diſtinct perſons. The firſt is *natural*, the ſecond is *moral*, whereunto I refer that which is *ſpiritual* or *myſtical*; and the third *federal*, by virtue of mutual compact. In all theſe ways is Chriſt in *conjunction* with his church, and in every one of them, in a way *ſingular* and peculiar.

1*ſt*, The firſt conjunction of diſtinct perſons is *natural*. God hath made all mankind *of one blood*, Acts xvii. 26. whereby there is a cognation and alliance between them all. Hence every man, is every man's brother or neighbour, unto whom loving-kindneſs is to be ſhewed, Luke x. 36. *Which now of theſe three, thinkeſt thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?* And this conjunction was between Chriſt and the church; as the apoſtle declares, Heb. ii. 14, 15. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage.* Hence *both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one*, verſe 11. His infinite condeſcenſion in coming into this communion and conjunction of nature with us, was before declared: but it is not common, like that between all other men partakers of the ſame nature. There are *two things* wherein it was peculiar eminent.

(1.) This *conjunction* between him and the church, did not ariſe from a *neceſſity of nature*, but from a *voluntary* act of his will. The conjunction that is between all others is neceſſary. Every man is every man's brother whether he will or no, by being a man. Natural generation communicating to every one his ſubſiſtence in the ſame nature, prevents all acts of their own will and choice. With the Lord Chriſt it was otherwiſe, as the text affirms: for ſuch reaſons as are there expreſſed, he did by an act of his own will *partake of fleſh and blood*, or came into this conjunction with us. He did it of his own choice, *becauſe the children did partake of the ſame*. He *would* be what the children were. Wherefore the *conjunction* of Chriſt in human nature with the church, is *ineffably* diſtinct from that common conjunction which is amongſt all others in the ſame nature. And therefore, although it ſhould not be meet amongſt mere men, that one ſhould act and ſuffer in the ſtead of others, becauſe they are all thus related to one another as it were whether they will or no; yet this could not reach the Lord Chriſt, who in a ſtrange and wonderful manner came into this conjunction by a mere act of his own.

(2.) He came into it on this deſign, and for this only end, namely, that *in our nature taken to be his own*, he might do and ſuffer what was to be done and ſuffered for the church: ſo it is added in the text; *that by death he might deſtroy him who had the power of death; and deliver them who for fear of death were ſubject to bondage.* This was the only end of his conjunction in nature with the church: and this puts the caſe between him and it, at a vaſt diſtance from what is or may be between other men. It is a fooliſh thing to argue, that becauſe a *mere participation of the ſame nature* among men, is not ſufficient to warrant the righteouſneſs of puniſhing one for another; that therefore the conjunction in the ſame nature betwixt Chriſt and the church, is not a ſufficient and juſt foundation of his ſuffering for us, and in our ſtead: for by *an act of his own will and choice* he did partake of our nature, and that for this very end, that therein he might ſuffer for us, as the Holy Ghoſt expreſsly declares. Amongſt *others* there neither is nor can be any thing of this nature; and ſo no objection from what is equal or inequal amongſt them, can ariſe againſt what is equal between Chriſt and the church. And herein is he glorious and precious unto them that believe, as we ſhall ſee immediately.

2*dly*, There is a *myſtical conjunction* between Chriſt and the church, which anſwers all the moſt ſtrict *real* or *moral unions* or *conjunctions* between other perſons or things. Such is the conjunction between the head of a body and its members, or the tree of the vine and its branches, which are *real*; or between an huſband and wife, which is *moral* and real alſo. That there is ſuch a conjunction between Chriſt and his church, the ſcripture plentifully declares, as alſo that it is the foundation of the equity of his ſuffering in its ſtead. So ſpeaks the apoſtle, Eph. v. 25.—32. *Huſbands, love your wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the church*, (that is, his wife, the bride the Lamb's wife), *and gave himſelf for it*, &c. Being the Head and Huſband of the church, which was to be ſanctified and ſaved, and could be ſo no otherwiſe but by his blood and ſufferings, he was both meet ſo to ſuffer, and it was righteous alſo that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto them for whom he both did it, and ſuffered. Let the adverſaries of the glory of Chriſt aſſign any one inſtance of *ſuch a conjunction*, union and relation between any amongſt mankind, as is between Chriſt and the church, and they may give ſome countenance unto their cavils againſt his obedience and ſufferings in our ſtead, with the imputation of what he did and ſuffered unto us. But the glory of Chriſt is *ſingular* herein, and

as ſuch it appears unto them by whom the myſtery of it is in any meaſure ſpiritually apprehended.

But yet it will be ſaid, that this *myſtical conjunction* of Chriſt with his church is *conſequential* unto what he did and ſuffered for it; for it enſues on the converſion of men unto him. For it is by faith that we are implanted unto him. Until that be actually wrought in us, we have no *myſtical conjunction* with him. He is not an *Head* or an *Huſband* unto unregenerate, unſanctified unbelievers, whilſt they continue ſo to be: and ſuch was the ſtate of the whole church when Chriſt ſuffered for us, Rom. v. 8. *But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* Eph. ii. 5. *Even when we were dead in ſins hath quickened us together with Chriſt.* There was therefore no ſuch *myſtical conjunction* between him and the church, as to render it meet and equal that he ſhould ſuffer in its ſtead. Wherefore, the church is the *effect of the work of redemption*, that which roſe out of it, which was made and conſtituted by it; and cannot be ſo the *object* of it, as that which was to be redeemed by virtue of an antecedent conjunction with it. I anſwer,

(1.) Although this *myſtical conjunction* is not actually conſummate without an actual participation of the Spirit of Chriſt, yet the church of the elect was deſigned antecedently unto all his ſufferings, to be his ſpouſe and wife, ſo as that he might love her and ſuffer for her; ſo it is ſaid, Hoſ. xii. 12. *Iſrael ſerved for a wife, and for a wife he kept ſheep.* Howbeit, ſhe was not his *married wife* until after he had ſerved for her, and thereby purchaſed her to be his wife; yet as he ſerved for her, ſhe is called his *wife*, becauſe of his *love* unto her, and becauſe ſhe was ſo deſigned to be upon his ſervice. So was the church deſigned to be the ſpouſe of Chriſt in the counſel of God, whereon he loved her, and gave himſelf for her.

Hence in the work of redemption, the church was the *object* of it, as deſigned to be the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and the *effect* of it, inaſmuch as that thereby it was made meet for the full conſummation of that alliance; as the apoſtle expreſsly declares, Eph. v. 26, 27. *Huſbands, love your wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the church, and gave himſelf for it: that he might ſanctify and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water by the word, that he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.*

(2.) Antecedently unto all that the Lord Chriſt did and ſuffered for the church, there was a ſupreme act of the will of God the Father, *giving all the elect unto him*, intruſting them

with him, to be redeemed, ſanctified, and ſaved; as himſelf declares, John xvii. 6. *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men which thou giveſt me out of the world; thine they were, and thou giveſt them me; and they have kept thy word.* ver 9. *I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, for they are thine.* Chap. x. 14, 15, 16. And on theſe grounds this myſtical conjunction between Chriſt and the church hath its virtue and efficacy before it be actually conſummate.

3*dly*, There is a *federal conjunction* between diſtinct perſons: and as this is various according unto the variety of the intereſts and ends of them that enter into it; ſo that is moſt eminent, where one by the common conſent of all that are concerned, undertakes to be a *ſponſor* or *ſurety* for others, to do and anſwer what on their part is required of them for attaining the ends of the covenant. So did the Lord Chriſt undertake to be *Surety* of the new covenant in behalf of the church, Heb. vii. 22. *By ſo much was Jeſus made a ſurety of a better teſtament;* and thereon tendered himſelf unto God to do and ſuffer for them, in their ſtead, and on their behalf, whatever was required, that they might be ſanctified and ſaved. Theſe things I have treated of at large elſewhere, as containing a great part of the myſtery of the wiſdom of God in the ſalvation of the church. Here therefore I do only obſerve, that this is that whereby the *myſtical conjunction* that was between Chriſt and the church, whereon it was *meet*, *juſt*, and *equal* in the ſight of God, that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto us, is completed.

Theſe are ſome of the foundations of that *myſtery of tranſmitting the ſins of the church*, as unto the guilt and puniſhment of them, from the ſinners themſelves, unto another every way innocent, pure and righteous in himſelf, which is the life, ſoul and centre of all ſcripture-revelations. And herein is he exceedingly *glorious*, and precious unto them that believe. No heart can conceive, no tongue can expreſs the glory of Chriſt herein. Now becauſe his infinite condeſcenſion and love herein have been ſpoken to before, I ſhall here only inſtance its greatneſs in ſome of its effects.

Firſt, It ſhines forth in the *exaltation of the righteouſneſs of God in the forgiveneſs of ſins.* There is no more adequate conception of the divine nature, than that of *juſtice* in rule and government. Hereunto it belongs to puniſh ſin according unto its deſert; and herein conſiſted the firſt actings of God as the governor of the rational creation; they did ſo in the eternal puniſhment of the *angels* that ſinned, and the caſting of Adam

out of *paradiſe*, an emblem alſo of everlaſting ruin. Now all the church, all the elect of God are ſinners; they were ſo in Adam; they have been and are ſo in themſelves. What doth become the juſtice of God to do thereon? ſhall it diſmiſs them all unpuniſhed? where then is that juſtice which *ſpared not the angels* who ſinned, nor Adam at the firſt? would this procedure have any conſonancy thereunto, be reconcilable unto it? Wherefore the eſtabliſhment of the righteouſneſs of God on the one hand, and the forgiveneſs of ſin on the other, ſeem ſo contradictory, as that many ſtumble and fall at it eternally, Rom. x. 3, 4. *For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God. For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.*

But in this interpoſition of Chriſt, in this *tranſlation* of puniſhment from the church unto him, by virtue of his conjunction therewith, there is a bleſſed harmony between the righteouſneſs of God and the forgiveneſs of ſins; the exemplification whereof, is his eternal glory. *O bleſſed change! O ſweet permutation!* as Juſtine Martyr ſpeaks.

By virtue of his union with the church, which of his own accord he entered into, and his undertaking therein to anſwer for it in the ſight of God, it was a righteous thing with God, to lay the *puniſhment of all our ſins upon him*, ſo as that he might freely and graciouſly pardon them all, to the honour and exaltation of his juſtice, as well as of his grace and mercy, Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt: whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.*

Herein is he *glorious* in the ſight of God, angels and men. In him there is at the ſame time, in the ſame divine actings, a glorious reſplendency of *juſtice* and *mercy*: of the one in puniſhing; of the other in pardoning. The appearing inconſiſtency between the righteouſneſs of God and the ſalvation of ſinners, wherewith the conſciences of convinced perſons are exerciſed and terrified, and which is the rock at which moſt of them ſplit themſelves into eternal ruin, is herein removed and taken away. In his croſs were divine holineſs and vindictive juſtice exerciſed and manifeſted; and through his triumph, grace and mercy are exerted to the utmoſt. This is that glory which raviſheth the hearts, and ſatiates the ſouls of them that

believe. For what can they deſire more, what is further needful unto the reſt and compoſure of their ſouls, than at one view to behold God eternally well pleaſed in the declaration of his righteouſneſs, and the exerciſe of his mercy, in order unto their ſalvation? In due apprehenſions hereof, let my ſoul live; in the faith hereof let me die, and let preſent admiration of this glory make way for the eternal enjoyment of it in its beauty and fulneſs.

He is *glorious*, in that the *law of God* in its *preceptive part*, or as unto the obedience which it required, was perfectly fulfilled and accompliſhed. That it ſhould be ſo, was abſolutely neceſſary from the wiſdom, holineſs and righteouſneſs of him, by whom it was given: for what could be more remote from thoſe divine perfections, than to give a law, which never was to be fulfilled in them unto whom it was given, and who were to have the advantages of it? This could not be done by us; but through the obedience of Chriſt, by virtue of this his *myſtical conjunction* with the church, the law was ſo fulfilled in us by being fulfilled for us, as that the glory of God in the giving of it, and annexing eternal rewards unto it, is exceedingly exalted, Rom. viii. 3, 4. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh: that the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.*

This is that glory of Chriſt whereof one view by faith, will ſcatter all the fears, anſwer all the objections, and give relief againſt all the deſpondencies of poor tempted, doubting ſouls; and an *anchor* it will be unto all believers, which they may caſt within the vail, to hold them firm and ſtedfaſt in all trials, ſtorms and temptations, in life and death.

CHAP. X.

The glory of Chriſt in the communication of himſelf unto believers.

ANOTHER inſtance of the glory of Chriſt which we are to behold here by faith, and hope that we ſhall do ſo by ſight hereafter, conſiſts in the *myſterious communication of himſelf, and all the benefits of his mediation, unto the ſouls of them that do believe, to their preſent happineſs and future eternal bleſſedneſs.*

Hereby he becomes theirs as they are his; which is the life, the glory and conſolation of the church, Cant. vi. 3. *I am my*

beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he feedeth among the lilies. Chap. ii. 16. iii. 10. He, and all that he is, being appropriated unto them by virtue of their myſtical union; there is, there muſt be ſome ground, formal reaſon and cauſe of this relation between Chriſt and the church, whereby *he is theirs*, and *they are his*; he is in them, and they in him; ſo as it is not between him and other men in the world. The apoſtle ſpeaking of this *communication* of Chriſt unto the church, and the union between them which doth enſue thereon, affirms that it is a *great myſtery*: for *I ſpeak*, ſaith he, *concerning Chriſt and the church*, Eph. v. 32.

I ſhall very briefly inquire into the cauſes, ways and means of this *myſtical communication*, whereby he is made to be ours, to be in us, to dwell with us, and all the benefits of his mediation to belong unto us: for, as was ſaid, it is evident that he doth not thus communicate himſelf unto all by a *natural neceſſity*, as the ſun gives light equally unto the whole world; nor is he *preſent with all*, by an *ubiquity of his human nature*; nor as ſome dream, by a *diffuſion of his rational ſoul* into all; nor doth he become ours by a *carnal eating* of him in the ſacrament; but this *myſtery* proceeds from, and depends on other reaſons and cauſes, as we ſhall briefly declare.

But yet before I proceed to declare the way and manner whereby Chriſt communicateth himſelf unto the church, I muſt premiſe ſomething of *divine communications* in general, and their glory. And I ſhall do this by touching a little on the harmony and correſpondency that is between the old creation and the new.

1. All *being*, *power*, *goodneſs*, and *wiſdom*, were originally, eſſentially, infinitely in God: and in them, with the other perfections of his nature, conſiſted his eſſential glory.

2. The old creation was a *communication* of being and goodneſs by almighty power, directed by infinite wiſdom, unto all things that were created for the manifeſtation of that glory. This was the firſt *communication* of God unto any thing without himſelf, and it was exceeding glorious, Pſal. xix. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work.* Rom. i. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; ſo that they are without excuſe.* And it was a *curious machine*, framed in the ſubordination and dependency of one thing on another, without which they could not ſubſiſt, nor have a continuance of their beings. All creatures below live on the earth, and the

products of it; the earth for its whole *production* depends on the ſun and other heavenly bodies, as God declares, Hoſ. ii. 21, 22. *I will hear, ſaith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they ſhall hear Jezreel.* God hath given a ſubordination of things, in a concatenation of cauſes, whereon their ſubſiſtence doth depend. But,

3. In this mutual dependency on, and ſupplies unto one another, they all depend on, and are influenced from God himſelf, the eternal fountain of being, power, and goodneſs. He *hears the heavens;* and in the continuation of this order by conſtant divine communication of being, goodneſs, and power unto all things, God is no leſs glorified than in the firſt creation of them, Acts xiv. 17. *Nevertheleſs, he left not himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* Chap. xvii. 24. *God that made the world and all things therein, ſeeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.*

4. This glory of God is *viſible* in the matter of it, and is obvious unto the reaſon of mankind; for from his works of creation and providence, they may learn his eternal power and Godhead, wherein he is eſſentially glorious.

5. But by this divine communication, God did not intend only to glorify himſelf in the eſſential properties of his nature, but his *exiſtence* alſo in *three perſons, of Father, Son, and Spirit.* For although the whole creation in its firſt framing, and in its perfection, was and is by an emanation of power and goodneſs, from the divine nature, in the perſon of the Father, as he is the fountain of the Trinity, whence he is ſaid peculiarly to be the Creator of all things; yet the immediate *operation* in the creation was from the Son, the power and wiſdom of the Father, John i. 1, 2, 3. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 3. And as upon the firſt production of the maſs of the creation, it was under the ſpecial care of the *Spirit of God* to preſerve and cheriſh it, unto the production of all diſtinct ſorts of creatures, Gen. i. 2. *And the earth was without form and void; and darkneſs was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters:* ſo in the continuance of the whole, there is an eſpecial *operation of the ſame Spirit* in all things. Nothing can ſubſiſt one moment,

by virtue of the dependence which all things have on one another, without a continual emanation of power from him, Pſal. civ. 29, 30. *Thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; thou takeſt away their breath, thy die, and return to their duſt. Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou reneweſt the face of the earth.*

By theſe divine *communications* in the production and preſervation of the creature, doth God manifeſt his glory, and by them alone in the way of nature he doth ſo; and without them, although he would have been for ever eſſentially glorious, yet was it impoſſible that his glory ſhould be known unto any but himſelf. Wherefore on theſe divine *communications* doth depend the whole manifeſtation of the glory of God. But this is far more eminent, though not in the outward effects of it ſo viſible, in the new creation, as we ſhall ſee.

1. All *goodneſs*, *grace*, *life*, *light*, *mercy* and *power*, which are the ſprings and cauſes of the new creation, are all originally in God, in the divine nature, and that infinitely and eſſentially. In them is God eternally or eſſentially glorious; and the whole deſign of the *new creation* was to manifeſt his glory in them, by external communications of them and from them.

2. The firſt communication of and from theſe things, is made unto Chriſt as the *head of the church*. For in the firſt place, it *pleaſed God, that in him ſhould all the fulneſs of theſe things dwell*, ſo as that the whole *new creation* might *conſiſt* in him, Col. i. 17, 18, 19. And this was the firſt egreſs of divine wiſdom, for the manifeſtation of the glory of God in theſe holy properties of his nature. For,

3. This communication was made unto him, as a *repoſitory* and treaſury of all that goodneſs, grace, life, light, power, and mercy, which were neceſſary for the conſtitution and preſervation of the new creation. They were to be laid up in him, to be hid in him, to dwell in him; and from him to be communicated unto the whole myſtical body, deſigned unto him, that is, the church. And this is the firſt *emanation* of divine power and wiſdom, for the manifeſtation of his glory in the new creation. This conſtitution of Chriſt as the *head* of it, and the treaſuring up in him all that was neceſſary for its production and preſervation, wherein the church is choſen and pre-ordained in him unto grace and glory, is the ſpring and fountain of divine glory, in the communications that enſue thereon.

4. This *communication* unto Chriſt is, (1.) Unto his perſon: and then, (2.) With reſpect unto this office. It is in the perſon of Chriſt that *all fulneſs* doth originally dwell. On the

aſſumption of human nature into perſonal union with the Son of God, all fulneſs dwells in him bodily, Col. ii. 9. And thereon receiving the Spirit in all fulneſs, and not by meaſure, all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge were *hid* in him, Col. ii. 3. and he was filled with the unſearchable *riches* of divine grace, Eph. iii. 8. And the *office* of Chriſt is nothing but the way appointed in the wiſdom of God, for the communication of the treaſures of grace, which were communicated unto his perſon. This is the end of the whole office of Chriſt in all the parts of it, as he is a *prieſt*, a *prophet*, and a *king*. They are, I ſay, nothing but the ways appointed by infinite widom for the communication of the grace laid up in his perſon unto the church. The tranſcendent glory hereof, we have in ſome weak meaſure inquired into.

5. The decree of *election* prepared, if I may ſo ſay, the *maſs of the new creation*. In the old creation, God firſt prepared and created the *maſs* or matter of the whole, which afterwards by the power of the Holy Spirit, was formed into all the diſtinct beings whereof the whole creation was to conſiſt; and animated according to their diſtinct kinds. And in order unto the production and perfecting of the work of the new creation, God did from eternity, in the holy purpoſe of his will, *prepare*, and in deſign *ſet apart* unto himſelf, that portion of mankind whereof it was to conſiſt. Hereby they were only the *peculiar matter* that was to be wrought upon by the Holy Ghoſt, and the glorious fabric of the church erected out of it. What was ſaid, it may be, of the natural body, by the pſalmiſt, is true of the myſtical body of Chriſt, which is principally intended, Pſal. cxxxix. 15, 16. *My ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret; and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth. Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* The ſubſtance of the church whereof it was to be formed, was under the eye of God, as propoſed in the *decree of election*; yet was it as ſuch imperfect. It was not formed or ſhaped into members of the myſtical body. But they were all written in the *book of life*. And in purſuance of the purpoſe of God, there they are by the Holy Spirit, in the whole courſe and continuance of time in their ſeveral generations, faſhioned into the ſhape deſigned for them.

6. This therefore is herein, the glorious order of divine communications. From the infinite eternal ſpring of wiſdom, grace, goodneſs, and love in the *Father*, all the effects whereof unto this end were treaſured up in the perſon and mediation

of the *Son*; the Holy Spirit, unto whom the actual *application* of them is committed, communicates *life*, *light*, *power*, *grace* and *mercy* unto all that are deſigned parts of the *new creation*. Hereon doth God glorify both the eſſential properties of his nature, his infinite *wiſdom*, *power*, *goodneſs*, and *grace*, as the only eternal ſpring of all theſe things; and alſo his ineffable glorious *exiſtence* in three perſons, by the order of the communication of theſe things unto the church, which are originally from his nature. And herein is the glorious truth of the *bleſſed Trinity*, which by ſome is oppoſed, by ſome neglected, by moſt looked on as that which is ſo much above them, as that it doth not belong unto them, made precious unto them that believe, and becomes the foundation of their faith and hope. In a view of the glorious order of thoſe divine communications, we are are in a ſteady contemplation of the ineffable glory of the exiſtence of the nature of God in the three diſtinct perſons of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.

7. According unto this *divine order*, the elect in all ages are, by the Holy Spirit moving and acting on that *maſs of the new creation*, formed and animated with ſpiritual life, light, grace, and power, unto the power, unto the glory of God. They are not called accidently according unto the external occaſions and cauſes of their converſion unto God; but in every age, at his own time and ſeaſon, the Holy Spirit communicates theſe things unto them, in the order declared, unto the glory of God.

8. And in the ſame manner is the whole *new creation* preſerved every day; every *moment* there is vital power and ſtrength, mercy and grace communicated in this divine order to all believers in the world. There is a continual influence from the *fountain*, from the head, into all the members, whereby they all *conſiſt* in him, are acted by him, who worketh in us *both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure*: and the apoſtle declares, that the whole conſtitution of *church-order* is ſuited as an external inſtrument to promote theſe divine communications, unto all the members of the church itſelf, Eph. iv. 13.—16. *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt: that we henceforth be no more children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but ſpeaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Chriſt: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which*

every joint ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, maketh increaſe of the body, unto the edifying of itſelf in love.

This in general is the *order of divine communications*, which is for the ſubſtance of it continued in heaven, and ſhall be ſo unto eternity; for God is, and ever will be *all in all.* But at preſent, it is inviſible unto the eyes of fleſh, yea the reaſon of men. Hence it is by the moſt deſpiſed, they ſee no glory in it; but let us conſider the prayer of the apoſtle, that it may be otherwiſe with us, Eph. i. 16. to 23. *(I) ceaſe not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your underſtanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints, and what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power; which he wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all.* For the revelation made of the glory of God in the old creation, is exceeding inferior to that which he makes of himſelf in the new.

Having premiſed theſe things in general concerning the *glory of divine communications*, I ſhall proceed to declare in particular, the grounds and way whereby the Lord Chriſt *communicates himſelf*, and therewithal all the benefits of his mediation, unto them that do believe, as it was before propoſed.

We on our part are ſaid herein to *receive him*, and that by faith, John i. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* Now where he is received by us, he muſt be tendered, given, granted, or communicated unto us. And this he is by ſome divine acts of the Father, and ſome of his own.

The foundation of the whole is laid in a ſovereign act of the will, the pleaſure, the grace of the *Father.* And this is the order and method of all divine operations in the way and work of grace. They originally proceed all from him; and having effected their ends, do return, reſt, and centre in him again, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and with-*

out blame before him in love ; having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Wherefore, that Chriſt is made ours, that he is communicated unto us, is originally from the free act, grant, and donation of the Father, 1 Cor. i. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* Rom. v. 15, 16, 17. And hereunto ſundry things do concur. As, (1.) his *eternal purpoſe* which he purpoſed in himſelf to glorify his grace in all his elect, by this communication of Chriſt, and the benefits of his mediation unto them, which the apoſtle declares at large, Eph. i. (2.) His *granting all the elect unto Chriſt* to be his own, ſo to do and ſuffer for them what was antecedaneouſly neceſſary unto the actual communication of himſelf unto them. *Thine thy were, and thou gaveſt them to me,* John xvii. 6. (3.) The giving of the *promiſe,* or the conſtitution of the rule and law of the goſpel, whereby a participation of Chriſt, an intereſt in him, and all that he is, is made over and aſſured unto believers, John i. 12. 1 John i. 1, 2, 3, 4. (4.) An act of *almighty power,* working and creating faith in the ſouls of the elect, enabling them to receive Chriſt ſo exhibited and communicated unto them by the goſpel, Eph. i. 19, 20. *And what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power ; which he wrought in Chriſt, when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.* Chap. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8. Theſe things which I have but named, have an influence into the glory of Chriſt herein : for this *communication* of him unto the church, is an effect of the eternal counſel, wiſdom, grace, and power of the Father.

But they are the *acts of Chriſt himſelf* herein, which principally we inquire into, as thoſe which manifeſt the glory of his wiſdom, love, and condeſcenſion.

And, 1. He gives and communicates unto them his *Holy Spirit ;* the Holy Spirit as peculiarly his, as granted unto him of the Father, as inhabiting in him in all fulneſs. The Spirit abiding *originally* as to his perſon, and *immeaſurably* as unto his effects and operations in himſelf, he gives unto all believers to *inhabit and abide* in them alſo, John xiv. 14. *If ye ſhall aſk any thing in my name, I will do it.* ver. 20. *At that day ye ſhall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* 1 Cor. vi. 17. *But he that is joined unto the Lord, is one ſpirit.* Hence follows an *ineffable union* between him and them. For as in

his incarnation he took our *nature* into perſonal union with his own; ſo herein he takes our *perſons* into a *myſtical union* with himſelf. Hereby he becomes ours, and we are his.

And herein is he *unſpeakably glorious*. For this myſtery of the *inhabitation* of the ſame Spirit in him as the Head, and the church as his body, animating the whole, is a tranſcendent effect of divine wiſdom. There is nothing of this nature in the whole creation beſides; no ſuch union, no ſuch mutual communication. The ſtricteſt unions and relations in nature are but ſhadows of it, Eph. v. 25.——32. Herein alſo is the Lord Chriſt *precious* unto them that do believe, but a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a rock of offence unto the diſobedient. This glorious ineffable effect of his wiſdom and grace, this rare, peculiar, ſingular way of the communication of himſelf unto the church, is by many deſpiſed. They know, it may be, ſome of them, what it is to be joined *unto an harlot*, ſo as to become one fleſh; but what it is to be joined *unto the Lord*, ſo as to become one ſpirit, they know not. But this principle and ſpring of the ſpiritual life of the church, and of all vital ſpiritual motions towards God, and things heavenly, wherein, and whereby our *life is hid with Chriſt in God*, is the glory, the exaltation, the honour, the ſecurity of the church, unto the praiſe of the grace of God. The underſtanding of it in its cauſes, effects, operations, and privileges wherewith it is accompanied is to be preferred above all the wiſdom in, and of the world.

2. He thus communicates himſelf unto us by the *formation of a new nature*, his own nature in us; ſo as that the very ſame ſpiritual nature is in him, and in the church. Only it is with this difference, that in him it is in the abſolute perfection of all thoſe glorious graces wherein it doth conſiſt; in the church it is in various *meaſures* and *degrees*, according as he is pleaſed to communicate it. But the *ſame divine nature* it is that is in him and us; for through the precious promiſes of the goſpel, we are made *partakers of his divine nature*. It is not enough for us, that he hath taken our nature to be his, unleſs he gives us alſo his nature to be ours; that is, implants in our ſouls all thoſe gracious qualifications, as unto the eſſence and ſubſtance of them, wherewith he himſelf in his human nature is endued. This is that *new man*, that *new creature*, that *divine nature*, that *ſpirit* which is born of the Spirit, that *transformation* into the image of Chriſt, that *putting* of him *on*, that *workmanſhip* of God, whereunto in him we are created, that the ſcripture ſo fully teſtifieth unto, John iii. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is ſpirit.* Rom. vi.

3.—8. *Know ye not, that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death: that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death: we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin. For he that is dead, is freed from ſin. Now if we be dead with Chriſt, we believe that we ſhall alſo live with him.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Chap. v. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* Eph. iv. 20. *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt.* ver. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.* 2 Pet. i. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes; that by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt.*

And that new *heavenly nature* which is thus formed in believers, as the firſt vital act of that union which is between Chriſt and them, by the inhabitation of the ſame Spirit, is peculiarly *his* nature. For both is it ſo as it is in *him*, the *idea* and the exemplar of it in us, inaſmuch as we are predeſtinated to be conformed unto his image; and as it is wrought or produced in our ſouls by an emanation of power, virtue, and efficiency from him

This is a moſt heavenly way of the communication of himſelf unto us, wherein of *God he is made unto us wiſdom and ſanctification.* Hereon he ſays of his church, *This now is bone of my bone, and fleſh of my fleſh;* I ſee myſelf, my own nature in them, whence they are comely and deſirable. Hereby he makes way to *preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but holy and without blemiſh.* On this communication of Chriſt unto us, by the forming *of his own nature* in us, depends all the purity, the beauty, the holineſs, the inward glory of the church. Hereby is it really, ſubſtantially, internally ſeparated from the world, and diſtinguiſhed from all others, who in the outward forms of things, in the profeſſion and duties of religion ſeem to be the ſame with them. Hereby it becomes the *firſt-fruits of the creation unto God*, bearing forth the renovation of his image in the world; herein the Lord Chriſt is, and will be *glorious* unto all eternity. I only

mention theſe things, which deſerve to be far more largely inſiſted on.

3. He doth the ſame by that *actual inſtitution or implantation into himſelf*, which he gives us by faith: which is of his own operation. For hereon two things do enſue; one by the grace or power, the other by the law or conſtitution of the goſpel, which have a great influence into this *myſtical communication* of Chriſt unto the church.

And the firſt of theſe is, that thereby there is communicated unto us, and we do derive *ſupplies of ſpiritual life*, ſuſtentation, motion, ſtrength in grace, and perſeverance from him continually. This is that which himſelf ſo divinely teacheth in the *parable of the vine* and its branches, John xv. 1, 2. *I am the true vine, and my Father is the huſbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* Hereby is there a continual communication from his *all-fulneſs of grace* unto the whole church, and all the members of it, unto all the ends and duties of ſpiritual life. *They live, nevertheleſs not they, but Chriſt liveth in them; and the life which they lead in the fleſh, is by the faith of the Son of God.* And the other, by virtue of the *law* and *conſtitution* of the goſpel, is that hereon his *righteouſneſs*, and all the fruits of his mediation, are imputed unto us; the glory of which myſtery the apoſtle unfolds, Rom. iv. 4, 5. *Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.*

I might add hereunto the *mutual inbeing* that is between him and believers by *love*; for the way of the communication of his love unto them, being by the *ſhedding of it abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghoſt*, and their returns of love unto him being wrought in them by an *almighty efficiency of the ſame Spirit*, there is that which is deeply myſterious and glorious in it. I might mention alſo the *continuation of his diſcharge* of all his offices towards us, whereon all our receptions from him, or all the benefits of his mediation, whereof we are made partakers, do depend. But the few inſtances that have been given of the glory of Chriſt in this *myſterious communication of himſelf unto his church*, may ſuffice to give us ſuch a view of it, as to fill our hearts with holy admiration and thankſgiving.

CHAP. XI.

The glory of Chriſt in the recapitulation of all things in him.

IN the laſt place, the Lord Chriſt is peculiarly and eminently glorious in the *recapitulation of all things in him*, after they had been ſcattered and diſordered by ſin. This the apoſtle propoſeth as the moſt ſignal effect of divine wiſdom, and the ſovereign pleaſure of God. *He hath abounded toward us in all wiſdom and prudence, having made known unto us the myſtery of his will, according unto his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf: that in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him*, Eph. i. 8, 9, 10.

For the diſcovery of the mind of the Holy Ghoſt in theſe words, ſo far as I am at preſent concerned, namely, as unto the *repreſentation of the glory of Chriſt in them*, ſundry brief obſervations muſt be premiſed; and in them it will be neceſſary, that we briefly declare the original of all theſe things in heaven and earth, their primitive order, the confuſion that enſued thereon, with their reſtitution in Chriſt, and his glory thereby.

1. God alone hath all being in him. Hence he gives himſelf that name, I AM, Exod. iii. 14. He was eternally *All*; when all things elſe that ever were, or now are, or ſhall be, were nothing. And when they are, they are no otherwiſe, but as *they are of him, and from him, and to him*, Rom. xi. 36. Moreover, his *being* and *goodneſs* are the ſame. The *goodneſs* of God is the meetneſs of the *divine Being* to be communicative of itſelf in its effects. Hence this is the firſt notion of the *divine nature, infinite being and goodneſs in a nature intelligent and ſelf-ſubſiſtent*. So the apoſtle declares it, *He that cometh unto God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder*, Heb. xi. 6.

2. In this ſtate of *infinite, eternal being and goodneſs*, antecedent unto an act of wiſdom or power without himſelf, to give exiſtence unto other things, God was, and is eternally in himſelf all that he will be, all that he can be, unto eternity. For where there is infinite being and infinite goodneſs, there is infinite bleſſedneſs and happineſs, whereunto nothing can be added: God is always the ſame. That is his name, Pſal. cii. 27. *Thou art he*, always the ſame. All things that are, make no addition unto God, no change in his ſtate. His bleſſedneſs,

happineſs, ſelf-ſatisfaction, as well as all other his infinite perfections, were abſolutely the ſame before the creation of any thing, whilſt there was nothing but himſelf, as they are ſince he hath made all things: for the bleſſedneſs of God conſiſts in the *ineffable mutual inbeing* of the three holy perſons in the ſame nature, with the immanent reciprocal actings of the Father and the Son in the eternal love and complacency of the Spirit. Hereunto nothing can be added, herein no change can be made by any external work or effect of power. Herein doth God act in the perfect knowledge, and perfect love of his own perfections, unto an infinite acquieſcency therein, which is the divine bleſſedneſs. This gives us the true notion of the divine nature, antecedent unto the manifeſtation of it made by any outward effects. Infinite being and goodneſs, eternally bleſſed in the knowledge and enjoyment of itſelf, by inconceivable, ineffable, internal actings anſwering the manner of its ſubſiſtence, which is in three diſtinct perſons.

3. This *being and goodneſs* of God by his own will and pleaſure, acting themſelves in infinite wiſdom and power, produced the creation of all things. Herein he communicated a finite, limited, dependent being and goodneſs unto other things without himſelf. For all being and goodneſs being, as was ſaid, in him alone, it was neceſſary that the firſt outward work and effect of the divine nature, muſt be the communication of being and goodneſs into other things. Wherefore as when he had given unto every thing its *being* out of nothing, by the word of his power, ſaying, *Let them be, and they were*; ſo it is ſaid, that he looked on all that he had made, and behold, *they were exceeding good*, Gen. i. *ult.* Being and goodneſs muſt be the firſt outward effects of the divine nature, which being wrought by infinite power and wiſdom, do repreſent unto us the glory of God in the creation of all things. Infinite being in ſelf-ſubſiſtence, which is neceſſary in the firſt cauſe and ſpring of all things; infinite goodneſs to communicate the effect of this being unto that which was not, and infinite wiſdom and power in that communication, are glorioufly manifeſted therein.

4. In this ſtate, all things that were made, depended *immediately* on God himſelf, without the interpoſition of any other head of influence or rule. They had the continuance of their being and its preſervation, from the immediate actings of theſe properties of the divine nature whereby they were made; and their dependence on God was by virtue of that law, which

was implanted on the principles and powers of their ſeveral natures by God himſelf.

5. Thus *in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* He provided himſelf of *two diſtinct rational families*, that ſhould depend on him according to a law of moral obedience, and thereby give glory to him; with two diſtinct habitations for them cognate unto their nature and uſe; heaven above, and the earth beneath. The earth he appointed for the habitation of man, which was every way ſuited unto the conſtitution of his nature, the preſervation of his being, and the end of his creation in giving glory to God. Heaven he prepared for the habitation of the angels, which was ſuited unto the conſtitution of their nature, the preſervation of their being, and the end of their creation in giving glory to God. Wherefore as *man* had power and dominion over all things here below, and was to uſe them all unto the glory of God, by which means God received glory from them alſo, though in themſelves brute and inanimate; ſo the *angels* had the like dominion over the cœleſtial and ætherial bodies, wherewith God had fitted the place of their habitation, that through the contemplation and uſe of them, God might have a revenue of glory and praiſe from them alſo. To ſuppoſe any other race *of intellectual creatures*, beſides angels in heaven, and men on earth, is not only without all countenance from any divine teſtimony, but it diſturbs and diſorders the whole repreſentation of the glory of God made unto us in the ſcripture, and the whole deſign of his wiſdom and grace as declared therein. *Intellectual creatures* not comprehended in that government of God, and myſtery of his wiſdom in Chriſt, which the ſcripture reveals, are a *chimera* framed in the imaginations of ſome men, ſcarce duly ſenſible of what it is to be *wiſe unto ſobriety.*

6. This order of things was *beautiful* and comely. Hence were they all ſaid to be *exceeding good.* For each of theſe families had their *own immediate, diſtinct dependence* on God. He was the immediate head of them. There was no other common head interpoſed between God and them. They were not an head unto one another. There were no communications unto them, but what were immediate from God himſelf. And their union among themſelves was in this alone, that all their obedience did meet and centre in God. So God made the heavens and the earth, and two diſtinct families in them for himſelf.

7. This beautiful order in itſelf, this union between the two families of God, was diſturbed, broken, diſſolved by the entrance of ſin: for hereby part of the family above, and the

whole family below, fell off from their dependence on God, and ceaſing to centre in him as their head, they fell into variance and enmity among themſelves. For the centre of this union and order being removed and loſt, nothing but enmity and confuſion remained among them. Hereon, to ſhew that its goodneſs was loſt, God curſed the earth and all that was in it; for it was put in ſubjection unto man, who was now fallen from him: howbeit he curſed not the heavens which were in ſubjection unto the angels, becauſe ſome of them only left their habitation; and the habitation of the reſidue was not to be curſed for their ſakes. But mankind was wholly gone off from God.

8. The angels that ſinned, God utterly rejected for ever, as an example of his ſeverity; the whole race of mankind he would not utterly caſt off, but determined to recover and ſave a remnant according to the election of grace; which how he did it in a way of condecency unto all his divine perfections, I have elſewhere declared.

9. Howbeit he would not reſtore them into their former ſtate, ſo as to have again two diſtinct families, each in an immediate dependence on himſelf, though he left them in different and diſtinct habitations, Eph. iii. 15.; but he would gather them both into one, and that under a new head, in whom the one part ſhould be preſerved from ſinning, and the other delivered from ſin committed.

10. This then is that which the apoſtle declares in theſe words, *To gather together in one all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him.* And ſo he again expreſſeth it, Col. i. 20. *To reconcile all things unto himſelf in him, whether they are things in heaven, or things in earth.* All things were fallen into diſorder and confuſion by ſin; they were fallen off from God into variance among themſelves. God would not reſtore them into their firſt order, in an immediate dependence on his divine perfections. He would no longer keep them in two diſtinct families; but he would in his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs gather them up into *one common head*, on whom they ſhould have their immediate dependence, and be reconciled again among themſelves.

11. This *new head*, wherein God hath gathered up all things in heaven and earth into one, one body, one family, on whom is all their dependence, in whom they all now conſiſt, is *Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God incarnate*, 1 Cor. xi. 3. Eph. i. 22, 23. *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulneſs of him*

that filleth all in all. This glory was reſerved for him; none other could be meet for it, or worthy of it, Col. i. 17, 18, 19. *And he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firſt-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.*

12. To anſwer all the ends of this *new Head* of God's *recollected family*, all power in heaven and earth, all fulneſs of grace and glory, is committed unto him. There is no communication from God, no act of rule towards this family, no ſupply of virtue, power, grace, or goodneſs unto angels or men, but what is immediately from this *new Head*, whereinto they are gathered. In him they all conſiſt, on him do they depend, unto him are they ſubject; in their relation unto him doth their peace, union, and agreement among themſelves conſiſt. This is the *recapitulation of all things* intended by the apoſtle.

13. It is true, that he acts diſtinctly and variouſly towards the two parts of the *recollected family* of angels and men, according as their different ſtates and conditions do require. For, (1.) We had need of a reparation by redemption and grace, which the angels had not. (2.) Angels were capable of immediate confirmation in glory, which we are not, until we come to heaven. Therefore, (1.) He aſſumed our nature that it might be repaired; which he did not the nature of the angels. (2.) He gives us union unto himſelf by his Spirit, which exalts us into a dignity and honour, meet for the fellowſhip with them in the ſame family.

This is a brief account of the myſterious work of divine wiſdom, in the *recapitulation* of all things in Jeſus Chriſt; and herein is he tranſcendently glorious; for his glory herein is far above our comprehenſion: yet ſome few things may be obſerved, to direct us in the view and contemplation of it. As,

1. He alone was a *meet and capable ſubject of it.* He only could bear the weight of this glory. No mere creature in heaven or earth was meet to be thus made the head of the whole new creation of God. In none of them could all things conſiſt. None of them was meet to be thus in the place of God, to have all things depend upon him, and be put in ſubjection unto him, ſo as that there ſhould be no communication between God and the creation, but by and through him alone. Wherefore when the Holy Ghoſt aſſigns this glory unto him, he ſo deſcribes him, as that we may diſcern his ſingular meetneſs for it; as that he is *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, upholding all things by the word of*

his power, Heb. i. 3.; that he is *the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; by whom all things were created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist*, Col. i. 15, 16, 17. Such an one alone and no other, was meet to bear and uphold this glory. And the glory of his person is such, as that it is the blessedness of all creatures to centre in this glory of his office.

2. This is that glory which God designed unto his only Son incarnate; and it gives us a little view into the glory of that mystery, the wonderful eternal design of God to glorify himself in the incarnation of Christ. God would have his eternal, his only begotten Son to be incarnate, to take our nature on him, to be made man. What is his design in this incomprehensible work of his wisdom, love, and power? Indeed in the first place, it was for the *redemption of the church*, by the sacrifice of himself and other acts of his mediation. But their is that which is more general and comprehensive, and wherein all the concerns of the glory of God do centre; and this was, that he might *gather all things into one* in him, that the whole creation, especially that which was to be eternally blessed, should have a new head given unto it for its sustentation, preservation, order, honour, and safety. All springs are in him, and all streams are unto him, and in and by him unto God. Who can express the divine beauty, order, and harmony of all things, that are in this their *recapitulation* in Christ? The union and communion between angels and men, the order of the whole family in heaven and earth, the communication of life, grace, power, mercy, and consolation to the church, the rule and disposal of all things unto the glory of God, do all depend hereon. This glory designed unto his Son incarnate, and it was the greatest, the highest that could be communicated unto him. For as the apostle observes, *All things are put in subjection unto him, he only excepted who doth so make them subject, that is, God the Father*, 1 Cor. xv. 27.

There is no contemplation of the glory of Christ, that ought more to affect the hearts of them that do believe with delight and joy, than this of the *recapitulation* of all things in him. One view by faith of him in the place of God, as the supreme Head of the whole creation, moving, acting, guiding and disposing of it, will bring in spiritual refreshment unto a believing soul. And it will do so the more, in that it gives a glorious representation of his divine nature also. For that any mere crea-

ture ſhould thus be an head of life, motion, and power, as alſo of ſovereign rule, and diſpoſal of the whole new creation, with all things reduced into order thereby, is not only an impious, but a fooliſh imagination.

Did we live more in the contemplation of this glory of Chriſt, and of the wiſdom of God in this *recapitulation* of all things in him, there is not any thing of our *duty* which it would not mind us of, nor any thing of *privilege* which it would not give us a ſenſe of, as might eaſily be demonſtrated.

3. In particular, the Lord Chriſt is glorious herein, in that the whole breach made on the glory of God in the creation by the entrance of ſin, is hereby repaired and made up. The beauty and order of the whole creation conſiſted in its dependence on God by the obedience of the rational part of it, angels and men. Thereby were the being, the goodneſs, the wiſdom and power of God made manifeſt. But the beauty of this order was defaced, and the manifeſtation of the divine perfections unto the glory of God eclipſed by the entrance of ſin. But all is reſtored, repaired and made up in this *recapitulation* of all things in one *new head* Chriſt Jeſus; yea, the whole curious frame of the divine creation is rendered more beautiful than it was before. Hence the whole of it groaneth for the intereſt of each part in this reſtoration of all things. Whatever there is of order, of beauty, of glory in heaven above, or in earth beneath, it all ariſeth from this new relation of the creation unto the Son of God. Whatever is not gathered into one, even in him in its place and according to its meaſure, is under darkneſs, diſorder, and the curſe. Hence the Jews have a ſaying, that *in the days of the Meſſiah all things ſhall be healed but the ſerpent*, that is, the devil, and the wicked men which are as his ſeed.

4. He is glorious herein, in that he is appointed as the only means of exerting, and expreſſing all the treaſures of the infinite wiſdom of God towards his creatures. The wiſdom of God is abſolutely, always and in all things infinite. God doth not, God cannot act with more wiſdom in one thing than in another; as in the creation of man, than in that of any inanimate creatures. In the firſt creation, infinite wiſdom was the inſeparable companion of infinite power. *How marvellous are thy works, O Lord! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all.* But when the effects of this divine wiſdom in their principal beauty and glory were defaced, greater treaſures of wiſdom were required unto their reparation. And in this *recollection* of all things in Chriſt did God lay them forth unto the utmoſt of whatever he will do in dealing with his creatures; ſo the apoſtle expreſſeth

it, Eph. iii. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.* By the *recapitulation* of all things into this one head, the manifold, various, unſearchable wiſdom of God, was made known unto the angels themſelves. They knew not before of the deſign and work of God after the entrance of ſin. Theſe could not comprehend the wiſdom that might repair that loſs. They knew not that divine wiſdom had another way to take herein, at leaſt they knew not what way that ſhould be. But hereby the manifold wiſdom of God, his infinite wiſdom in the treaſures of it, able by various ways to attain the ends of his glory, was made known unto them. Herein, namely, in the *recollection* of all things in Chriſt, divine wiſdom hath made known and repreſented itſelf in all its ſtores and treaſures unto angels and men. *In him are hid*, and by him are diſplayed, *all the treaſures of wiſdom*, Col. ii. 3. Herein is he glorious, and will be ſo unto eternity.

5. He is glorious herein, in that hereby *firmneſs and ſecurity is communicated unto the whole new creation.* The firſt creation in its order was a curious and glorious fabric. But every thing depending immediately on God, by virtue of the principles of its own nature, and the law of its obedience, all was brought unto a loſs by the ſin of angels and men. But now every thing that belongs unto this new creation, even every believer in the world, as well as the angels in heaven, being gathered together into this one head, the whole and all, and every part and member of it, even every particular believer, are ſecured from ruin, ſuch as befel all things before. In this *new head* they have an indiſſoluble conſiſtency.

But *manum de tabula.* I ſhall inſiſt on no more inſtances of this nature, which plentifully offer themſelves in the ſcripture unto us. For who can declare this glory of Chriſt? who can ſpeak of theſe things as he ought? I am ſo far from deſigning to ſet forth the whole of it, that I am deeply ſenſible how little a portion I can comprehend of the leaſt part of it. Nor can I attain unto any ſatisfaction in theſe meditations, but what iſſue in an humble admiration.

CHAP. XII.

Differences between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, and by ſight in heaven. The firſt of them explained.

WE *walk here by faith, and not by ſight*, 2 Cor. v. 7. That is, in the life of God, in our walking before him, in the whole of our obedience therein, we are under the conduct and influence of *faith*, and not of *ſight*. Theſe are the two ſpiritual powers of our ſouls; by the one whereof we are made partakers of grace, holineſs, and obedience in this life, and by the other of eternal bleſſedneſs and glory.

Both theſe, namely, *faith* and *ſight*, the one in this life, the other in that which is to come, have the ſame immediate object: for they are the abilities of the ſoul to go forth unto, and to embrace their object. Now this object of them both is *the glory of Chriſt*, as hath been declared, as alſo what that glory is, and wherein it doth conſiſt; wherefore my preſent deſign is to inquire into the *difference that is between our beholding of the glory of Chriſt in this world by faith, and the viſion which we ſhall have of the ſame glory hereafter.*

The *latter of theſe* is peculiarly intended in that prayer of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt for his diſciples, John xvii. 24. *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.* But I ſhall not diſtinctly inſiſt upon it, my deſign being another way, reſpecting principally the *work of God in this life*, and the privileges which we enjoy thereby: yet I ſhall now take a ſhort proſpect of that alſo; not abſolutely, but in the differences that are between *faith* and *ſight*, or the view which we have of the glory of Chriſt in this world by *faith*, and that which they enjoy by *viſion* who are above; the object of them both being adequately the ſame.

But herein alſo, I ſhall have reſpect only unto *ſome of thoſe things* which concern our practice, or the preſent immediate exerciſe of faith. For I have elſewhere handled at large the *ſtate of the church above*, or that of preſent glory; giving an account of the adminiſtration of the *office of Chriſt in heaven*, his preſence among the glorified ſouls, and the adoration of God under his conduct: I have alſo declared the advantage which they have by being with him, and the proſpect they have of his glory. Therefore theſe things muſt here be only touched on.

Theſe differences may be referred unto two heads. (1.) Thoſe which ariſe from the *different natures* and actings of thoſe *means* and *inſtruments* whereby we apprehend this glory of Chriſt, namely, *faith* and *viſion*. And, (2.) Thoſe that ariſe from the different *effects* produced by them. Inſtances in each kind ſhall be given.

Firſt, The *view* which we have of the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, is *obſcure, dark, inevident, reflexive*. So the apoſtle declares, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *Now we ſee through a glaſs, darkly: through* or *by a glaſs in a riddle*, a parable, a dark ſaying. There is a double *figurative* limitation put upon our view of the glory of Chriſt, taken from the two ways of our perception of what we apprehend, namely, the *ſight* of things, and the *hearing* of words. The firſt is, that we have this view not *directly*, but *reflexively*, and by way of a repreſentation, as in a *glaſs*. For I take the glaſs here, not to be *optical*, or a proſpective which helps the ſight, but a *ſpeculum*, or a glaſs which reflects an image of what we do behold. It is a ſight like that which we have of a man in a glaſs, when we ſee not his perſon or ſubſtance, but an image or repreſentation of them only, which is imperfect.

The ſhadow or *image* of this glory of Chriſt is drawn in the goſpel, and therein we behold it as the likeneſs of a man repreſented unto us in a glaſs; and although it be *obſcure* and imperfect in compariſon of his own real, ſubſtantial glory, which is the object of viſion in heaven; yet is it the only *image* and *repreſentation* of himſelf, which he hath left, and given unto us in this world. That woful curſed invention of *framing images* of him out of ſtocks and ſtones however adorned, or repreſentations of him by the *art of painting*, are ſo far from preſenting unto the minds of men any thing of his real glory, that nothing can be more effectual to divert their thoughts and apprehenſions from it. But by this figurative expreſſion of *ſeeing in a glaſs*, the apoſtle declares the *comparative imperfection* of our preſent view of the glory of Chriſt.

But the *alluſion* may be taken from an *optic glaſs* or *tube* alſo, whereby the ſight of the eye is helped in beholding things at a great diſtance. By the aid of ſuch *glaſſes* men will diſcover ſtars or heavenly lights, which by reaſon of their diſtance from us, the eye of itſelf is no way able to diſcern. And thoſe which we do ſee, are more *fully* repreſented, though remote enough from being ſo, *perfectly*. Such a *glaſs* is the goſpel, without which we can make no diſcovery of Chriſt at all; but

in the uſe of it, we are far enough from beholding him in the *juſt dimenſions* of his glory.

And he adds another intimation of this imperfection, in an alluſion unto the way whereby things are propoſed and conveyed unto the minds and apprehenſions of men. Now this is by *words*. And theſe are either plain, proper and direct, or dark, *figurative* and *parabolical*: and this latter way makes the conception of things to be difficult and imperfect; and by reaſon of imperfection of our view of our glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, the apoſtle ſaith, it is in a *riddle*. Theſe the pſalmiſt calls *dark ſayings*, Pſal. lxxviii. 2.

But here it muſt be obſerved, that the deſcription and repreſentation of the Lord Chriſt and his glory in the goſpel, is not abſolutely, or in itſelf either dark or obſcure; yea, it is *perſpicuous*, plain and direct; Chriſt is therein *evidently ſet forth crucified*, exalted, glorified. But the apoſtle doth not here diſcourſe concerning the way or means of the revelation of it unto us, but of the means or *inſtrument* whereby we comprehend that revelation. This is our faith, which as it is in us, being weak and imperfect, we comprehend the *repreſentation* that is made unto us of the glory of Chriſt, as men do the ſenſe of a *dark ſaying*, *a riddle*, *a parable*, that is, imperfectly, and with difficulty. On the account hereof we may ſay at preſent, *How little a portion is it that we know of him?* as Job ſpeaks of God, chap. xxvi. 14. How imperfect are our conceptions of him? how weak are our minds in their management? There is no part of his glory that we can fully comprehend. And what we do comprehend, (as there is a *comprehenſion* in faith, Eph. iii. 18.) we cannot abide in the ſteady contemplation of. For ever bleſſed be that ſovereign grace, whence it is that he who *commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of his own glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, and therein of the glory of Chriſt himſelf; that he hath ſo revealed him unto us, as that we may love him, admire him, and obey him: but conſtantly, ſteadily, and clearly to behold his glory in this life we are not able, for we *walk by faith, and not by ſight*.

Hence our ſight of him here, is as it were by *glances*, liable to be clouded by many interpoſitions. *Behold he ſtandeth behind the wall, he looketh forth at the windows, ſhewing* (flouriſhing) *himſelf through the latteſs*, Cant. ii. 9. There is a great interpoſition between him and us, as a *wall*; and the means of the diſcovery of himſelf unto us, as through a *window* and *latteſs*, include a great inſtability and imperfection in our view and ap-

prehenſion of him. There is a *wall* between him and us, which yet he ſtandeth behind. Our *preſent mortal ſtate* is this *wall*, which muſt be demoliſhed before we can ſee him as he is. In the mean time he looketh through the *windows* of the ordinances of the goſpel. He gives us ſometimes, when he is pleaſed to ſtand in theſe *windows*, a view of himſelf; but it is *imperfect*, as is our ſight of a man through a *window*. The appearances of him at theſe *windows* are full of refreſhment unto the ſouls of them that do believe. But our view of them is imperfect, tranſient, and doth not abide: we are for the moſt part quickly left to bemoan what we have loſt. And then our beſt is but to cry; *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God: my ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before thee?* when wilt thou again give me to ſee thee, though but as through the *windows?* Alas! what diſtreſs do we oftentimes ſit down in, after theſe views of Chriſt and his glory! But he proceeds further yet; *and flouriſhes himſelf through the latteſſes.* This diſplaying of the glory of *Chriſt*, called the *flouriſhing of himſelf*, is by the *promiſes of the goſpel*, as they are explained in the miniſtry of the word. In them are repreſented unto us the deſirable beauties and glories of Chriſt; how precious, how amiable is he as repreſented in them; how are the ſouls of believers raviſhed with the views of them? Yet is this diſcovery of him alſo but as through a *latteſs*. We ſee him but by parts, unſteadily and unevenly.

Such, I ſay, is the ſight of the glory of Chriſt which we have in this world by faith. It is *dark*, it is but *in part*. It is but *weak, tranſient, imperfect, partial*. It is but *little* that we can at any time diſcover of it; it is but a *little while*, that we can abide in the contemplation of what we do diſcover, *rara horis, brevis mora*. Sometimes it is unto us as the ſun when it is under a cloud, we cannot perceive it. When he hideth his face, who then can behold him? As Job ſpeaks, ſo may we, *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him*, chap. xxiii. 8, 9. Which way ſoever we turn ourſelvees, and what duties ſoever we apply ourſelves unto, we can obtain no diſtinct view of his glory. Yet on the other hand, it is ſometimes as the ſun when it *ſhines in its brightneſs*, and we cannot bear the rays of it. In infinite condeſcenſion he ſays unto his church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me*, Cant. vi. 5. As if he could not bear that over-

coming affectionate love, which looks through the eyes of the church in its acting of faith on him. Ah! how much more do we find our ſouls overcome with his love, when at any time he is pleaſed to make any clear diſcoveries of his glory unto us! Let us now on the other hand, take a little conſideration of that *viſion* which we ſhall have of the ſame glory in heaven, that we may compare them together.

Viſion, or the ſight which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, is *immediate*, *direct*, *intuitive*, and therefore *ſteady*, even and conſtant. And it is ſo on a double account; (1.) Of the *object* which ſhall be propoſed unto us; (2.) Of the *viſive power* or faculty wherewith we ſhall be endued; from the imperfection of both which in this world, ariſeth the imperfection of our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, as hath been declared.

1. The *object* of it will be *real and ſubſtantial*. Chriſt himſelf in his own perſon with all his glory, ſhall be continually with us, before us, propoſed unto us. We ſhall no longer have an *image*, a repreſentation of him, ſuch as is the delineation of his glory in the goſpel. We *ſhall ſee him*, ſaith the apoſtle, *face to face*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. which he oppoſeth unto our ſeeing him *darkly as in a glaſs*, which is the utmoſt that faith can attain to. We ſhall *ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. not as now in an imperfect deſcription of him. As a man ſees his neighbour when they ſtand and converſe together face to face; ſo ſhall we ſee the Lord Chriſt in his glory, and not as Moſes who had only a tranſient ſight of ſome parts of the glory of God, when he cauſed it to paſs by him.

There will be uſe herein, of our bodily *eyes*, as ſhall be declared. For as Job ſays, *In our fleſh ſhall we ſee our Redeemer, and our eyes ſhall behold him*, chap. xix. 25, 26, 27. That corporeal ſenſe ſhall be reſtored unto us, and that glorified above what we can conceive, but for this great uſe of the eternal beholding of Chriſt and his glory. Unto whom it is matter of rejoicing, that with the *ſame eyes* wherewith they ſee the tokens and ſigns of him in the ſacrament of the ſupper, they ſhall behold himſelf immediately, in his own perſon. But principally, as we ſhall ſee immediately, this viſion is *intellectual*. It is not therefore the mere *human nature* of Chriſt, that is the object of it, but his *divine perſon* as that nature ſubſiſteth therein. What is that perfection which we ſhall have (for *that which is perfect muſt come and do away that which is in part*) in the comprehenſion of the *hypoſtatical union*, I underſtand not; but this I know, that in the immediate beholding of the perſon of

Chriſt, we ſhall ſee a glory in it a thouſand times above what here we can conceive. The excellencies of infinite wiſdom, love, and power therein, will be continually before us. And all the glories of the perſon of Chriſt, which we have before weakly and faintly inquired into, will be in our ſight for evermore. Hence the ground and cauſe of our bleſſedneſs is, that *we ſhall be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. as himſelf prays, *that we may be with him where he is, to behold his glory.* Here we have ſome dark views of it, we cannot perfectly behold it, until *we are with him* where he is. Thereon our ſight of him will be direct, intuitive, and conſtant.

There is a glory, there will be ſo ſubjectively in us in the beholding of this glory of Chriſt, which is at preſent incomprehenſible: for *it doth not yet appear what we ourſelves ſhall be*, 1 John iii. 2. Who can declare what a glory it will be in us to behold this glory of Chriſt? and how excellent then is that glory of Chriſt itſelf?

This immediate ſight of Chriſt, is that which all the ſaints of God in this life do breathe and pant after. Hence are they willing to be diſſolved, or deſire to *depart, that they may be with Chriſt, which is beſt for them*, Phil. i. 23. They chuſe to be *abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 8. or that they may enjoy the inexpreſſibly longed for ſight of Chriſt in his glory. Thoſe who do not ſo long for it, whoſe ſouls and minds are not frequently viſited with earneſt deſires after it, unto whom the thoughts of it are not their relief in trouble, and their chiefeſt joy, are carnal, blind, and *cannot ſee afar off*. He that is truly ſpiritual, entertains and refreſheth himſelf with thoughts hereof continually.

2. It will be ſo from that *viſive power* or faculty of beholding the glory of Chriſt, which we ſhall then receive. Without this we cannot ſee him as he is. When he was *transfigured in the mount*, and had on his human nature ſome reflections of his divine glory, his diſciples that were with him, were rather amazed than refreſhed by it, Matth. xvii. 6. *And when the diſciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were ſore afraid.* They ſaw his glory, but ſpake thereon *they knew not what*, Luke ix. 30. 33.; and the reaſon hereof was, becauſe no man in this life can have a *viſive power*, either ſpiritual or corporeal, directly and immediately to behold the real glory of Chriſt.

Should the Lord Jeſus appear now to any of us in his majeſty and glory, it would not be unto our edification nor conſolation. For we are not *meet* nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received, or can receive, to bear

the immediate appearance and repreſentation of him. His beloved apoſtle John had *leaned on his boſom* probably many a time in this life, in the intimate familiarities of love; but when he afterwards appeared unto him in his glory, he fell at *his feet as dead*, Rev. i. 17. And when he appeared unto Paul, all the account he could give thereof was, *that he ſaw a light from heaven, above the brightneſs of the ſun*, whereon he and all that were with him, *fell to the ground*, Acts xxvi. 13, 14.

And this was one reaſon why in the days of his miniſtry here on earth, his glory was vailed with the infirmities of the fleſh, and all ſorts of ſufferings, as we have before related. The church in this life is no way meet, by the grace which it can be made partaker of, to converſe with him in the immediate manifeſtations of his glory.

And therefore thoſe who dream of his *perſonal reign* on the earth before the day of judgment, unleſs they ſuppoſe that all the ſaints be *perfectly glorified* alſo, (which is only to bring down heaven to the earth for a while, to no purpoſe), provide not at all for the edification or conſolation of the church: for no *preſent grace* advanced unto the higheſt degree whereof in this world it is capable, can make us meet for an immediate converſe with Chriſt in his unvailed glory.

How much more abominable is the folly of men, who would repreſent the Lord Chriſt in his preſent glory by *pictures and images* of him? When they have done their utmoſt with their burniſhed glaſs and gildings, an eye can not only behold it, but if it be guided by reaſon, ſee it contemptible and fooliſh. But the true glory of Chriſt neither inward nor outward ſight can bear the rays of in this life.

The diſpenſation which we are meet for, is only that of his *preſence with us by the Spirit. We know him now no more after the fleſh*, 2 Cor. v. 16. We are advanced above that way and means of the knowledge of him by the *fleſhly carnal ordinances* of the Old Teſtament. And we know him not according unto that *bodily preſence* of his, which his diſciples enjoyed in the days of his fleſh. We have attained ſomewhat above that alſo: for ſuch was the nature of his miniſtry here on earth, that there could not be the promiſed diſpenſation of the Spirit until that was finiſhed. Therefore he tells his diſciples, that *it was expedient for him that he ſhould go away and ſend the Spirit to them*, John xvi. 7. Hereon they had a clearer view of the glory of Chriſt, than they could have by beholding him in the fleſh. This is our ſpiritual poſture and condition. We are paſt the knowledge of him according to the fleſh; we cannot attain

nor receive the *ſight* of him in glory; but *the life which we now lead, is by the faith of the Son of God.*

I ſhall not here inquire into the nature of this *viſion*, or the power and ability which we ſhall have in heaven to behold the glory of Chriſt. Some few things may be mentioned, as it relates unto our *minds* and our *bodies* alſo after the reſurrection.

1. For the mind, it ſhall be perfectly freed from all that darkneſs, unſteadineſs, and other incapacities, which here it is accompanied with, and whereby it is weakened, hindered, and obſtructed in the exerciſe of faith. And they are of two ſorts.

(1.) Such as are the remainders of that depravation of our natures, which came upon us by ſin. Hereby our minds became wholly vain, dark, and corrupt, as the ſcripture teſtifieth, utterly unable to diſcern ſpiritual things in a due manner. This is ſo far cured and removed in this life by grace, as that thoſe *who were in darkneſs, do become light in the Lord*, or are enabled to live unto God, under the conduct of a new ſpiritual light communicated unto them. But it is ſo cured and removed in *part* only, it is not perfectly aboliſhed. Hence are all our remaining weakneſſes and incapacities in diſcerning things ſpiritual and eternal, which we yet groan under, and long for deliverance from. No footſteps, no ſcares or marks that ever had place in our minds, ſhall abide in glory, Epheſians v. 27. Nothing ſhall weaken, diſturb, or incapacitate our ſouls, in acting all their powers unimpeded by vanity, diverſions, weakneſs, inability, upon their proper objects. The excellency hereof in univerſal liberty, and power, we cannot here comprehend: nor can we yet conceive the glory and beauty of thoſe immixed ſpiritual actings of our minds, which ſhall have no *clog* upon them, no encumbrance in them, no alloy of droſs accompanying of them. One pure act of ſpiritual ſight in diſcerning the glory of Chriſt, one pure act of love in cleaving unto God, will bring in more bleſſedneſs and ſatisfaction into our minds, than in this world we are capable of.

(2.) There is an *incapacity* in our minds as unto their actings on things ſpiritual and eternal, that is merely natural, from the poſture wherein they are, and the *figure* which they are to make in this life. For they are here *clothed with fleſh*, and that depaſed and corrupted. Now in this ſtate, though the mind act its conceptions by the body as its *organ* and inſtrument; yet is it variouſly ſtraitened, encumbered, and impeded in the exerciſe of its native powers, eſpecially towards things heavenly, by this priſon of the fleſh, wherein it is immured. There is an *angelical* excellency in the pure actings of the ſoul, when delivered

from all material inſtruments of them; or when they are glorified and made ſuitable helps in its utmoſt ſpiritual activity. How and by what degrees our minds ſhall be freed from theſe obſtructions in their beholding the glory of Chriſt, ſhall be afterwards declared.

2. Again, a *new light*, the *light of glory*, ſhall be implanted in them. There is a light in nature, which is the power of a man to diſcern the things of man; an ability to know, perceive, and judge of things natural. It is that *ſpirit of a man which is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly*, Prov. xx. 27.

But by the light hereof no man can diſcern ſpiritual things in a due manner, as the apoſtle declares, 1 Cor. ii. 11.—15. *For what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man which is in him? Even ſo the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things alſo we ſpeak, not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. But he that is ſpiritual, judgeth all things, yet he himſelf is judged of no man.* Wherefore God gives a ſuperior, a ſupernatural light, the light of faith and grace, unto them whom he effectually calls unto the knowledge of himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt. *He ſhines into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of his dear Son.* Howbeit this new light doth not aboliſh, blot out, or render uſeleſs the other light of nature, as the ſun when it riſeth extinguiſheth the light of the ſtars; but it directs it, and rectifies it, as unto its principal object and end. Yet is it in itſelf, a light quite of another nature. But he who hath only the former light, can underſtand nothing of it, becauſe he hath no taſte or experience of its power and operations. He may talk of it, and make inquiries about it, but he knows it not.

Now we have received this *light of faith* and grace, whereby we diſcern ſpiritual things, and behold the glory of Chriſt in the imperfect manner before deſcribed. But in heaven there ſhall be a ſuperadded *light of glory*, which ſhall make the mind itſelf *ſhine as the firmament*, Dan. xii. 3. I ſhall only ſay three things of it (1.) That as the *light of grace* doth not deſtroy or aboliſh the *light of nature*, but rectify and improve it; ſo the *light of glory* ſhall not aboliſh or deſtroy the *light of faith and*

grace, but by incorporating with it, render it abſolutely perfect. (2.) That as by the *light of nature* we cannot clearly comprehend the true nature and efficacy of the *light of grace*, becauſe it is of another kind, and is ſeen only in its own light; ſo by the *light of grace* we cannot comprehend this *light of glory*, being of a peculiar kind and nature, ſeen perfectly only by its own light. *It doth not appear what we ſhall be.* (3.) That this is the beſt notion we can have of this *light of glory*, that in the firſt inſtance of its operation, it *perfectly transforms the ſoul into the image and likeneſs of Chriſt.*

This is the *progreſs of our nature* unto its reſt and bleſſedneſs. The principles remaining in it concerning *good and evil*, with its practical convictions, are not deſtroyed, but improved by grace; as its blindneſs, darkneſs, and enmity to God are in part taken away. Being renewed by grace, what it receives here of ſpiritual life and light, ſhall never be deſtroyed but be perfected in glory. Grace renews nature, glory perfects grace; and ſo the whole ſoul is brought unto its reſt in God. We have an image of it in the *blind man* whom our Saviour cured, Mark viii. 22, 23, 24. He was abſolutely blind, born ſo, no doubt. Upon the firſt touch his eyes were opened, and he ſaw but very obſcurely; *he ſaw men walking like trees.* But on the ſecond he ſaw all things clearly. Our minds in themſelves are abſolutely blind: the firſt viſitation of them by grace, gives them a ſight of things ſpiritual, heavenly, and eternal, but it is obſcure and unſteady. The *ſight of glory* makes all things clear and evident.

2*dly*, The body as glorified, with its ſenſes, ſhall have its uſe and place herein. After we are clothed again with our fleſh, we ſhall *ſee our Redeemer with our eyes.* We know not here what power and ſpirituality there will be in the acts of our glorified bodies. Such they will be, as ſhall bear a part in eternal bleſſedneſs. Holy Stephen the firſt martyr, took up ſomewhat of glory by *anticipation* before he died. For when he was brought to his trial before the *council*, all that ſat therein *looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as the face of an angel*, Acts vi. 15. He had his *tranſfiguration*, according unto his meaſure, anſwerable unto that of our bleſſed Saviour on the mount. And by this initial beam of glory, he received ſuch a piercing vivacity and edge on his *bodily eyes*, that through all thoſe inconceivable diſtances between the earth and the reſidence of the bleſſed, he looked ſtedfaſtly into heaven, and *ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God*, Acts vii. 55, 56. Who then can declare what will be the power and acting of

this ſenſe of *ſight* when perfectly glorified; or what ſweetneſs and refreſhment may be admitted into our ſouls thereby?

It was a privilege (who would not have longed to partake of it?) to have ſeen him with our bodily eyes in the days of his fleſh, as did the apoſtles and other his diſciples. Howbeit he was not *then glorified* himſelf in the manifeſtation of his glory; nor they who ſaw him, in the change or transformation of their nature. How great this privilege was, himſelf declares unto thoſe that ſo ſaw him, Matth. xiii. 17. *Verily I ſay unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee;* whereunto we ſhall ſpeak immediately. And if this were ſo excellent a privilege, as that we cannot but congratulate them by whom it was enjoyed, how excellent, how glorious will it be, when with theſe eyes of ours, glorioufly purified and ſtrengthened beyond thoſe of Stephen, we ſhall behold Chriſt himſelf immediately in the fulneſs of his glory! He alone perfectly underſtands the greatneſs and excellency hereof, who prayed his Father, that thoſe who *believe in him, may be where he is, ſo to behold his glory.*

Theſe are ſome of the grounds of this firſt *difference* between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by *faith* here, and by *immediate viſion* hereafter. Hence the one is weak, imperfect, obſcure, reflexive; the other direct, immediate, even and conſtant: and we may ſtay a little in the contemplation of theſe things. This view of the *glory of Chriſt* which we have now ſpoken unto, is that which we are breathing and *panting* after; that which the Lord Chriſt prays that we may arrive unto; which the apoſtle teſtifies to be *our beſt;* the beſt thing, or ſtate, which our nature is capable of; that which brings eternal reſt and ſatisfaction unto our ſouls.

Here our ſouls are burdened with innumerable infirmities, and our faith is clogged in its operations by ignorance and darkneſs. This makes our beſt eſtate and higheſt attainments to be accompanied with *groans* for deliverance. *We which have received the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of the body,* Rom. viii. 23. Yea, whilſt we are in this tabernacle, we *groan earneſtly,* as being burdened, becauſe we are not *abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord,* 2 Cor. v. 2, 4, 8. The more we grow in faith, and ſpiritual light, the more ſenſible are we of our preſent burdens, and the more vehemently do we *groan* for deliverance into the *perfect liberty of the ſons of God.* This is the poſture of their minds who have received the *firſt-fruits of the Spirit,* in the moſt eminent degree. The nearer

any one is to heaven, the more earneſtly he deſires to be there, becauſe Chriſt is there: for the more frequent and ſteady are our views of him by faith, the more do we long and groan for the removal of all obſtructions and interpoſitions in our ſo doing. Now groaning is a vehement deſire mixed with ſorrow, for the preſent want of what is deſired. The deſire hath ſorrow, and that ſorrow hath joy and refreſhment in it; like ſhower that falls on a man in a garden in the ſpring; it wets him, but withal refreſheth him with the ſavour it cauſeth in the flowers and herbs of the garden where he is. And this *groaning*, which, when it is conſtant and habitual, is one of the choiceſt effects of faith in this life, reſpects what we would be *delivered from*, and what we would *attain unto*. The *firſt* is expreſſed, Rom. vii. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* The *other* in the places now mentioned. And this frame, with an intermixture of ſome ſighs from wearineſs by the troubles, ſorrows, pains, ſickneſſes of this life, is the beſt we can here attain unto.

Alas! we cannot here *think of Chriſt*, but we are quickly aſhamed of, and troubled at our own thoughts; ſo confuſed are they, ſo unſteady, ſo imperfect. Commonly they iſſue in a groan or a ſigh; *Oh! when ſhall we come unto him? when ſhall we be ever with him? when ſhall we ſee him as he is?* And if at any time he begins to give more than ordinary evidences and intimations of his glory and love unto our ſouls, we are not able to bear them, ſo as to give them any abiding reſidence in our minds. But ordinarily this trouble and groaning is amongſt our beſt attainments in this world; a trouble which I pray God I may never be delivered from, until deliverance do come at once from this ſtate of mortality. Yea, the good Lord increaſe this trouble more and more in all that believe.

The heart of a believer, affected with the glory of Chriſt, is like the *needle* touched with the *loadſtone*. It can no longer be quiet, no longer be ſatisfied in a diſtance from him. It is put into a continual motion towards him. The motion indeed is *weak* and *tremulous*. Pantings, breathings, ſighings, groanings, in prayer, in meditations, in the ſecret receſſes of our minds, are the life of it. However, it is continually preſſing towards him. But it obtains not its *point*, it comes not to its centre and reſt in this world.

But now *above*, all things are clear and ſerene; all plain and evident in our beholding the glory of Chriſt; we ſhall be *ever with him*, and *ſee him as he is*. This is heaven, this is bleſſedneſs, this is eternal reſt. The *perſon of Chriſt* in all his glory ſhall be

continually before us; and the eyes of our underſtandings ſhall be ſo glorioufly illuminated, as that we ſhall be able ſteadily to behold and comprehend that glory. But alas! here at preſent our minds *recoil*, our meditations fail, our hearts are overcome, our thoughts confuſed, and our eyes turn aſide from the luſtre of this glory; nor can we abide in the contemplation of it. But there, an immediate, conſtant view of it, will bring in everlaſting refreſhment and joy unto our whole ſouls.

This *beholding of the glory of Chriſt given him by his Father*, is indeed ſubordinate unto the ultimate viſion of the eſſence of God. What that is we cannot well conceive; only we know that *the pure in heart ſhall ſee God*. But it hath ſuch an immediate connection with it, and ſubordination unto it, as that without it we can never behold the face of God, as the objective bleſſedneſs of our ſouls. For he is, and ſhall be to eternity, the only means of communication between God and the church.

And we may take ſome direction, in our looking into and longing after this *perfect view* of the glory of Chriſt, from the example of the ſaints under the Old Teſtament. The ſight which they had of the glory of Chriſt, (for *they* alſo *ſaw his glory* through the obſcurity of its revelation, and its being vailed with *types and ſhadows*), was weak and imperfect in the moſt illuminated believers, much inferior unto what we now have by faith, through the goſpel. Yet ſuch it was, as encouraged them to *inquire and ſearch diligently into what was revealed*, 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. Howbeit, their diſcoveries were but dark and confuſed, ſuch as men have of things at a great diſtance, or *in a land that is very far off*, as the prophet ſpeaks, Iſ. xxxiii. 17. And the continuance of this vail on the revelation of the glory of Chriſt, whilſt a vail of ignorance and blindneſs was upon their hearts and minds, proved the ruin of that church in its apoſtaſy, as the apoſtle declares, 2 Cor. iii. 7. *But if the miniſtration of death written and engraven in ſtones, was glorious, ſo that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly behold the face of Moſes, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away.* ver. 13, 14. *And not as Moſes, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame vail untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament; which vail is done away in Chriſt.* This *double vail* (the *covering covered*, the *vail vailed*) God promiſed to take away, Iſ. xxv. 7. *And he will deſtroy in this mountain the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the vail that is ſpread over all nations.* And then ſhall they turn to the Lord, when they ſhall be able clearly to behold the

glory of Chriſt, 2 Cor. iii. 16. *Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the vail ſhall be taken away.* But this cauſed them, who were real believers among them, to deſire, long, and pray for the removal of theſe vails, the departure of thoſe ſhadows, which made it as night unto them in compariſon of what they knew would appear, when the *Sun of righteouſneſs ſhould ariſe with healing in his wings.* They thought it long ere *the day did break, and the ſhadows flee away*, Cant. ii. 17. chap. iv. 6. There was (as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. viii. 19.) a thruſting *forth of the head* with deſire and expectation of the exhibition of the Son of God in the fleſh, and the accompliſhment of all divine promiſes therein. Hence he was called *the Lord whom they ſought and delighted in*, Mal. iii. 1.

And great was the ſpiritual wiſdom of believers in thoſe days. They rejoiced and gloried in the ordinances of divine worſhip which they did enjoy. They looked on them as their chiefeſt privilege, and attended unto them with diligence, as an effect of divine wiſdom and love, as alſo becauſe they had a *ſhadow of good things to come.* But yet at the ſame time they longed and deſired that the *time of reformation were come*, wherein they ſhould all be removed; that ſo they might behold and enjoy the good things ſignified by them. And thoſe who did not ſo, but reſted in, and truſted unto their preſent inſtitutions, were not accepted with God. Thoſe who were really illuminated did not ſo, but lived in conſtant deſires after the revelation of the whole myſtery of the wiſdom of God in Chriſt, as did the angels themſelves, 1 Pet. i. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead.* Eph. iii. 9, 10. *And to make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.* In this frame of heart and ſuitable actings of their ſouls, there was more of the *power* of true faith and love, than is found among the moſt at this day. They ſaw the promiſes afar off, and were *perſuaded of them, and embraced them*, Heb. xi. 13. They reached out the arms of their moſt intent affections, to embrace the things that were promiſed. We have an inſtance of this frame in old Simeon, who ſo ſoon as he had taken the child Jeſus in his arms, cried out, *Now, Lord, let me depart*, now let me die, this is that which my ſoul hath longed for, Luke ii. 28, 29.

Our preſent darkneſs and weakneſs in beholding the glory of Chriſt, is not like theirs. It is not occaſioned by *a vail of types and ſhadows* caſt on it by the repreſentative inſtitutions of it; it doth not ariſe from the want of a clear *doctrinal revelation* of the perſon and office of Chriſt; but, as was before declared, it proceedeth from two other cauſes. *Firſt*, from the *nature of faith* itſelf, in compariſon of viſion. It is not able to look directly into this *excellent glory*, nor fully to comprehend it. *Secondly* from the *way of its propoſal*, which is not *ſubſtantial* of the thing itſelf, but only of an image of it, as in a glaſs. But the ſight, the view of the glory of Chriſt, which we ſhall have in heaven, is much more above that which we now enjoy by the goſpel, than what we do, or may to enjoy, is above what they have attained under their types and ſhadows. There is a far greater diſtance between the viſion of heaven, and the ſight which we have now by faith, than is between the ſight which we now have, and what they had under the Old Teſtament. Heaven doth more excel the goſpel-ſtate, then that ſtate doth the law. Wherefore, if they did ſo pray, ſo long for, ſo deſire the removal of their ſhadows and vails, that they might ſee what we now ſee, that they might ſo behold the glory of Chriſt, as we may behold it in the light of the goſpel; how much more ſhould we, if we have the ſame faith with them, the ſame love, (which neither will nor can be ſatisfied without perfect fruition), long and pray for the removal of all weakneſs, of all darkneſs and interpoſition, that we may come unto that immediate beholding of his glory, which he ſo earneſtly prayed that we might be brought unto?

To ſum up briefly what hath been ſpoken: There are three things to be conſidered concerning the glory of Chriſt, three degrees in its manifeſtation; the *ſhadow*, the *perfect image*, and the *ſubſtance* itſelf. Thoſe under the law had only the *ſhadow* of it, and of the things that belong unto it, they had not the *perfect image* of them, Heb. x. 1. Under the goſpel we have the *perfect image*, which they had not; or a clear complete revelation and declaration of it, preſenting it unto us as in a *glaſs*. But the enjoyment of theſe things in their *ſubſtance* is referred for heaven; we muſt be *where he is*, that we may behold his glory. Now there is a greater difference and diſtance between the real ſubſtance of any thing, and the moſt perfect image of it, than there is between the moſt perfect image, and the loweſt ſhadow of the ſame thing. If then they longed to be freed from their ſtate of types and ſhadows, to enjoy the repreſentation of the glory of Chriſt, in that image of it which is given us in the

goſpel; much more ought we to breathe and pant after our deliverance from beholding it in the *image* of it, that we may enjoy the *ſubſtance* itſelf. For whatever can be manifeſt of Chriſt on this ſide heaven, it is granted unto us for this end, that we may the more fervently deſire to be preſent with him.

And as it was their wiſdom and their grace to *rejoice* in the light they had, and in thoſe *typical adminiſtrations* of divine worſhip which ſhadowed out the glory of Chriſt unto them, yet did always pant after that more excellent light and full diſcovery of it, which was to be made by the goſpel; ſo it will be ours alſo, thankfully to uſe and improve the *revelations* which we enjoy of it, and thoſe *inſtitutions of worſhip* wherein our faith is aſſiſted in the view thereof; yet ſo as continually to breathe after that perfect, that glorifying *ſight* of it, which is reſerved for heaven above.

And may we not a little examine ourſelves by theſe things? Do we eſteem this *preſſing towards the perfect view of the glory of Chriſt* to be our duty, and do we abide in the performance of it? If it be otherwiſe with any of us, it is a ſignal evidence that our profeſſion is *hypocritical*. If Chriſt be in us, he is the hope of glory in us; and where that hope is, it will be active in deſires of the things hoped for. Many love the world too well, and have their minds too much filled with the things of it, to entertain deſires of *ſpeeding through* it, unto a ſtate wherein they may behold the glory of Chriſt. They are at home, and are unwilling to be abſent from the body, though to be preſent with the Lord. They hope it may be that ſuch a ſeaſon will come at one time or another, and then it will be the beſt they can look for when they can be here no more. But they have but a little ſight of the glory of Chriſt in this world by faith, if any at all, who ſo little, ſo faintly deſire to have the *immediate ſight* of it above. I cannot underſtand how any man can walk with God as he ought, or hath that love for Jeſus Chriſt which true faith will produce, or doth place his refreſhments and joy in ſpiritual things, in things above, that doth not on all juſt occaſions, ſo meditate on the glory of Chriſt in heaven, as to *long for an admittance into the immediate ſight* of it.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt alone perfectly underſtood wherein the eternal bleſſedneſs of them that believe in him doth conſiſt. And this is the ſum of what he prays for with reſpect unto that end; namely, *that we may be where he is, to behold his glory.* And is it not our duty to live in a continual *deſire of that* which he prayed ſo earneſtly that we might attain? If in ourſelves, we as yet apprehend but little of the glory, the excellency, the

bleſſedneſs of it, yet ought we to repoſe that confidence in the wiſdom and love of Chriſt, that is our beſt, infinitely better than any thing we can enjoy here below.

Unto thoſe who are inured unto theſe *contemplations*, they are the ſalt of their lives, whereby every thing is condited and made ſavoury unto them, as we ſhall ſhew afterwards. And the want of ſpiritual diligence herein, is that which hath brought forth a negligent, careleſs, worldly profeſſion of religion, which contenting itſelf with ſome outward duties, hath loſt out of it the power of faith and love in their principal operations. Hereby many deceive their own ſouls. Goods, lands, poſſeſſions, relations, trades, with ſecular intereſts in them, are the things whoſe image is drawn on their minds, and whoſe *characters* are written on their foreheads, as the titles whereby they may be known. As believers beholding the glory of Chriſt in the bleſſed glaſs of the goſpel, are changed into the ſame image and likeneſs by the Spirit of the Lord; ſo theſe perſons beholding the beauty of the world, and the things that are in it, in the curſed glaſs of ſelf-love, they are in their minds changed into the ſame image. Hence perplexing fears, vain hopes, empty embraces of periſhing things, fruitleſs deſires, earthly, carnal deſigns, curſed ſelf-pleaſing imaginations, feeding on and being fed by the love of the world and ſelf, do abide and prevail in them. But we have not ſo learned Chriſt Jeſus.

CHAP. XIII.

The ſecond difference between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, and by ſight in heaven.

FAITH is the light wherein we behold the *glory of Chriſt in this world*. And this, in its own nature, as unto this great end, is weak and imperfect, like weak eyes, that cannot behold the ſun in its beauty. Hence our ſight of it differs greatly from what we ſhall enjoy in glory, as hath been declared. But this is not all; it is frequently *hindered* and *interrupted* in its operations, or it loſeth the view of its object by one means or other. As he who ſees any thing at a great diſtance, ſees it imperfectly, and the leaſt interpoſition or motion takes it quite out of his ſight; ſo is it with our faith in this matter; whence ſometimes we can have little, ſometimes no ſight at all, of the glory of Chriſt by it. And this gives us, as we ſhall ſee, another *difference* between *faith* and *ſight*.

Now, although the conſideration hereof may ſeem a kind of *diverſion* from our preſent argument, yet I chuſe to inſiſt upon it, that I may evidence the reaſons whence it is that many have ſo little *experience* of the things whereof we have treated, that they find ſo little of *reality* or *power* in the exerciſe of this grace, or the performance of this duty. For it will appear in the iſſue, that the whole defect is in themſelves; the truth itſelf inſiſted on, is great and efficacious.

Firſt, Whilſt we are in this life, the Lord Chriſt is pleaſed in his *ſovereign wiſdom* ſometimes to withdraw, and as it were to hide himſelf from us. Then do our minds fall into clouds and darkneſs; faith is at a loſs, we cannot behold his glory; yea, we may ſeek him, but cannot find him. So Job complains, as we obſerved before: *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him*, chapter xxiii. 8, 9. Which way ſoever I turn myſelf, whatever are my endeavours, in what way or work of his own I ſeek him, I cannot find him, I cannot ſee him, I cannot behold his glory. So the church alſo complains; *Verily thou art a God that hideſt thyſelf, O God of Iſrael the Saviour*, Iſa. xlv. 15.; and the Pſalmiſt, *How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thyſelf for ever?* Pſal. lxxxix. 46. This hiding of the face of God, is the hiding of the ſhining of his glory in the face of Chriſt Jeſus, and therefore of the glory of Chriſt himſelf; for it is the glory of Chriſt to be the repreſentative of the glory of God. The *ſpouſe* in the Canticles is often at a loſs, and herein bemoans herſelf, that her beloved was withdrawn, that ſhe could neither find him nor ſee him, chap. iii. 1, 2. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth; I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not.* Chap. v. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone: my ſoul failed when he ſpake: I ſought him but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no anſwer.*

Men may retain their notions concerning Chriſt, his perſon, and his glory. Theſe cannot be blotted out of their minds, but by *hereſy* or *obdurate ſtupidity*. They may have the ſame *doctrinal knowledge* of him with others; but the ſight of his glory doth not conſiſt therein: they may abide in the outward performance of duties towards him as formerly; but yet all this while, as unto the eſpecial gracious communications of himſe

unto their ſouls, and as unto a cheerful refreſhing view of his glory, he may withdraw and hide himſelf from them.

As under the ſame outward diſpenſations of the word, he doth manifeſt himſelf unto ſome, and not unto others; (*How is it that thou wilt manifeſt thyſelf unto us, and not unto the world?* John xiv. 22.); whereon they to whom he doth ſo manifeſt himſelf, do ſee him to be beautiful, glorious and lovely, (for *unto them that believe he is precious*), whilſt the others ſee nothing hereof, but wonder at them by whom he is admired, Cant. v. 9. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?* ſo, in the ſame diſpenſation of the word, he ſometimes hides his face, turns away the light of his countenance, clouds the beams of his glory unto ſome, whilſt others are cheriſhed and warmed with them.

Two things we muſt here ſpeak unto.

1. *Why doth the Lord Chriſt at any time thus hide himſelf in his glory from the faith of believers, that they cannot behold him.*

2. *How we may perceive and know that he doth ſo withdraw himſelf from us, ſo that however we may pleaſe ourſelves, we do not indeed behold his glory.*

As unto the firſt of theſe, though what he doth is ſuppoſed an act of ſovereign *unaccountable wiſdom*, yet there are many holy ends of it, and conſequently reaſons for it. I ſhall mention one only. He doth it to *ſtir us up in an eminent manner unto a diligent ſearch and inquiry after him.* Woful ſloth and negligence are apt to prevail in us, in our mediations on heavenly things. *Though our hearts wake* (as the ſpouſe ſpeaks, Cant. v. 2.) in a valuation of Chriſt, his love, and his grace, *yet we ſleep*, as unto the due exerciſe of faith and love towards him. Who is it that can juſtify himſelf herein? that can ſay, *My heart is pure, I am clean from this ſin?* Yea, it is ſo far otherwiſe with many of us, that he is for ever to be admired in his patience, that on the account of our unkindneſs and woful negligence herein, he hath not only withdrawn himſelf at ſeaſons, but that he hath not utterly departed from us. Now he knows that thoſe with whom he hath been graciouſly preſent, who have had views of his glory, although they have not valued the mercy and privilege of it as they ought, yet can they not bear a ſenſe of his abſence, and his hiding himſelf from them. By this therefore will he awake them unto a diligent inquiry after him. Upon the diſcovery of his abſence, and ſuch a diſtance of his glory from them as their faith cannot reach unto it, they become *like the doves of the valleys, all of them mourning every one for his*

iniquity, and do ſtir up themſelves to ſeek him early and with diligence, Hoſ. v. 15 *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and ſeek my face: in their affliction they will ſeek me early.* So where-ever the *ſpouſe* intimates this *withdrawing of Chriſt from her*, ſhe immediately gives an account of her reſtleſs diligence and endeavours in her inquiries after him, until ſhe have found him, Chap. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city, found me: to whom I ſaid, Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? It was but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleaſe.* Chap. v. 2.—8. And in theſe inquiries there is ſuch an exerciſe of faith and love, though it may be acting themſelves moſtly in ſighs and groans, as is acceptable and well-pleaſing to him.

We are like him in the parable of the prophet that ſpake unto Ahab, who having one committed unto him to keep, affirms, that *whilſt he was buſy here and there, he was gone.* Chriſt commits himſelf unto us, and we ought carefully to keep his preſence; *I held him*, ſaith the church, and *would not let him go*, Cant. iii. 4. But whilſt we are buſy here and there, while our minds are over-filled with other things, he withdraws himſelf, we cannot find him. But even this rebuke is a ſanctified ordinance for our recovery, and his return unto us.

2. Our ſecond inquiry is, *How we may know when Chriſt doth ſo withdraw himſelf from us, that we doth not, that we cannot behold his glory.*

I ſpeak herein unto them alone, who make the obſervation of the lively actings of faith and love, in and towards Jeſus Chriſt, their chiefeſt concern in all their retirements, yea in their whole walk before God. Concerning theſe, our inquiry is, How they may know when Chriſt doth in any degree or meaſure *withdraw* from them ſo, as that they cannot in a due manner behold his glory?

And the firſt diſcovery hereof is by the *conſequents* of ſuch withdrawings. And what are the *conſequents* of it, we can know no otherways but by the effects of his preſence with us, and the

manifeſtation of himſelf unto us, which as unto ſome degrees muſt neceſſarily ceaſe thereon.

Now the firſt of theſe is the *life, vigour, and effectual acting of all grace in us.* This is an inſeparable conſequent and effect of a view of his glory. Whilſt we enjoy it, *we live, nevertheleſs not we, but Chriſt liveth in us,* exciting and acting all his graces in us.

This is that which the apoſtle inſtructeth us in; while we *behold his glory, as in a glaſs, we are transformed into the ſame image, from glory to glory,* 2 Cor. iii. 18. That is, whilſt by faith we contemplate on the glory of Chriſt as revealed in the goſpel, all grace will thrive and flouriſh in us towards a perfect conformity unto him. For whilſt we abide in this view and contemplation, our ſouls will be preſerved in holy frames, and in a continual exerciſe of love and delight, with all other ſpiritual affections towards him. It is impoſſible whilſt Chriſt is in the eye of our faith as propoſed in the goſpel, but that we ſhall labour to be like him, and greatly love him. Neither is there any way for us to attain unto either of theſe, which are the great concernments of our ſouls, namely, to be *like* unto Chriſt, and to *love* him, but by a conſtant view of him and his glory by faith, which powerfully and effectually works them in us. All the *doctrinal knowledge* which we have of him is uſeleſs; all the view we have of his glory is but fancy, imagination, or ſuperſtition which are not accompanied with this *transforming power.* And that which is wrought by it, is the increaſe and vigour of all grace; for therein alone our conformity unto him doth conſiſt. Growth in grace, holineſs and obedience, is a *growing like unto Chriſt,* and nothing elſe is ſo.

I cannot refrain here from a neceſſary ſhort *digreſſion.* This *transforming efficacy* from a ſpiritual view of Chriſt as propoſed in the goſpel, being loſt as unto an experience of it in the minds of men carnal and ignorant of the myſtery of believing, (as it is at preſent by many derided, though it be the life of religion), *fancy* and *ſuperſtition* provided various ſupplies in the room of it. For they found out *crucifixes* and *images* with *paintings,* to repreſent him in his ſufferings and glory. By theſe things, their carnal affections being excited by their outward ſenſes, they ſuppoſe themſelves to be affected with him, and to be like unto him. Yea, ſome have proceeded ſo far, as either by *arts diabolical,* or by other means, to make an appearance of *wounds on their hands, and feet, and ſides,* therein pretending to be like him; yea, to be wholly transformed into his *image.* But that which is produced by an image, is but an image: an imaginary

Chriſt will effect nothing in the minds of men, but imaginary grace.

Thus religion, was loſt and died. When men could not obtain any *experience* in their minds of the ſpiritual myſteries of the goſpel, nor be ſenſible of any ſpiritual change or advantage by them, they ſubſtituted ſome outward duties and obſervances in their ſtead; as I ſhall ſhew (God willing) elſewhere more at large. Theſe produced ſome kind of effects in their minds and affections, but quite of another nature than thoſe which are the real effects of true *evangelical* grace. This is openly evident in this ſubſtitution of *images*, inſtead of the repreſentation of Chriſt and his glory made in the goſpel.

However, there is a general ſuppoſition granted on all hands; namely, that there muſt be a *view of Chriſt* and *his glory*, to cauſe us to love him, and thereby to make us conformable or like unto him. But here lies the difference; thoſe of the *church of Rome* ſay, that this muſt be done by the beholding of *crucifixes*, with other images and pictures of him; and that with our bodily eyes: we ſay, it is by our beholding his glory by faith, as revealed in the goſpel, and no otherwiſe. And to confeſs the truth, we have ſome, who as they reject the *uſe of images*, ſo they deſpiſe that ſpiritual view of the glory of Chriſt, which we inquire after. Such perſons on the firſt occaſion will fall on the other ſide; for any thing is better than nothing.

But as we have a ſure word of prophecy to ſecure us from theſe abominations by an expreſs prohibition of ſuch images unto all ends whatever; ſo unto our ſtability in the profeſſion of the truth, and *experience* of the efficacy of this ſpiritual view of Chriſt, *transforming* our ſouls into his own likeneſs is abſolutely neceſſary. For if an *idolater* ſhould plead, as they do all, that in the beholding of the *image of Chriſt*, or of a *crucifix*, eſpecially if they are ſedulous and conſtant therein, they find their affection unto him greatly excited, increaſed, and enflamed, (as they will be, Iſa. lvii. 5. *Enflaming yourſelves with idols under every green tree, ſlaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks.*), and that thereon he endeavours to be like unto him, what ſhall we have to oppoſe thereunto? for it is certain that ſuch *images* are apt to make impreſſions on the minds of men; partly from the readineſs of the ſenſes and imagination to give them admittance into their thoughts; and partly from their natural inclinations unto ſuperſtition, their averſation from things ſpiritual and inviſible, with an inclination unto things preſent and viſible. Hence among them who are ſatisfied that they ought not to be adored

with any *religious veneration*, yet ſome are apt upon the ſight of them to entertain a *thoughtful reverence*, as they would do if they were to enter into a *Pagan temple* full of idols; and others are continually making approaches towards their uſe and veneration in *paintings and altars*, and ſuch outward poſtures of worſhip as are uſed in the religious ſervice of them. But that they do ſenſibly affect the minds of men carnal and ſuperſtitious, cannot be denied, and as they ſuppoſe, it is a love unto Chriſt himſelf. However, certain it is in general, and confeſſed on all hands, that the *beholding of Chriſt* is the moſt bleſſed means of exciting all our graces, ſpiritualizing all our affections, and transforming our minds into his likeneſs. And if we have not another, and that a more excellent way of *beholding him*, than they have who behold him as they ſuppoſe, in images and crucifixes, they would ſeem to have the advantage of us. For their minds will really be affected with ſomewhat, ours with nothing at all. And by the pretence thereof, they inveigle the carnal affections of men ignorant of the power of the goſpel, to become their *proſelytes*. For having lived, it may be, a long time without any the leaſt experience of a ſenſible impreſſion on their minds, or a transforming power from the repreſentation of Chriſt in the goſpel, upon their very firſt religious, devout application unto theſe images, they find their thoughts exerciſed, their minds affected, and ſome preſent change made upon them.

But there was a difference between the *perſon of David*, and and an *image with a bolſter of goats hair*, though the one were laid in the room and place of the other. And there is ſo between Chriſt and an image, though the one be put into the place of the other. Neither do theſe things ſerve unto any other end, but to divert the minds of men from faith and love to Chriſt; giving them ſome ſuch ſatisfactions in the room of them, as that their carnal affections do cleave unto their idols. And indeed it doth belong unto the wiſdom of faith, or we ſtand in need of ſpiritual light, to diſcern and judge between the working of natural affections towards ſpiritual objects, on undue motives, by undue means, with indirect ends, wherein all *papal devotion* conſiſts, and the ſpiritual exerciſe of grace in thoſe affections duly fixed on ſpiritual objects.

But as was ſaid, it is a real experience of the *efficacy* that there is in the ſpiritual *beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith* as propoſed in the goſpel, to ſtrenghten, increaſe and excite all grace unto its proper exerciſe, ſo changing and transforming the ſoul

gradually into his likeneſs, which muſt ſecure us againſt all thoſe pretences. And ſo I return from this *digreſſion.*

Hereby we may underſtand whether the Lord Chriſt doth ſo *withdraw himſelf*, as that we do not, as that we cannot behold his glory by faith in a due manner, which is the thing inquired after. For if we grow *weak in our graces*, unſpiritual in our frames, cold in our affections, or negligent in the exerciſe of them by holy meditation, it is evident that he is at a great diſtance from us, ſo as that we do not *behold his glory* as we ought. If the weather grow cold, herbs and plants do wither, and the froſt begins to bind up the earth; all men grant that the *ſun* is withdrawn, and makes not its wonted approach unto us. And if it be ſo with our hearts, that they grow *cold, frozen, withering, lifeleſs* in and unto ſpiritual duties, it is certain that the Lord Chriſt is in ſome ſenſe withdrawn, and that we do not behold his glory. We retain *notions* of truth concerning his perſon, office, and grace; but faith is not in conſtant exerciſe, as to real views of him and his glory. For there is nothing more certain in Chriſtian experience than this is, that while we do really by faith behold the glory of Chriſt, as propoſed in the goſpel, the glory of his perſon and office as before deſcribed, and ſo abide in holy thoughts and meditations thereof, eſpecially in our private duties and retirements, *all grace* will live and thrive in us in ſome meaſure, eſpecially love unto his perſon, and therein unto all that belongs unto him. Let us but put it to the trial, and we ſhall infallibly find the promiſed event.

Do any of us find *decays in grace* prevailing in us, deadneſs, coldneſs, lukewarmneſs, a kind of ſpiritual ſtupidity and ſenſleſſneſs coming upon us; do we find an unreadineſs unto the exerciſe of grace in its proper ſeaſon, and the vigorous actings of it in duties of communion with God? and would we have our ſouls recovered from theſe dangerous diſeaſes? let us aſſure ourſelves there is *no better* way for our healing and deliverance, yea *no other* way but this alone, namely, the *obtaining a freſh view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, and a ſteady abiding therein.* Conſtant contemplation of Chriſt and his glory, putting forth its transforming power unto the revival of all grace, is the only relief in this caſe, as ſhall further be ſhewed afterwards.

Some will ſay, that this muſt be affected by *freſh ſupplies and renewed communications of the Holy Spirit.* Unleſs he fall as dew and ſhowers on our dry and barren hearts, unleſs he cauſeth our graces to ſpring, thrive, and bring forth fruit, unleſs he

revive and increaſe faith, love, and holineſs in our ſouls, our *backſlidings* will not be healed, nor our ſpiritual ſtate be recovered. Unto this end is he prayed for, and promiſed in the ſcripture, Cant. iv. 16. *Awake, O north-wind, and come, thou ſouth, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out.* Iſa. xliv. 3, 4. *For I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine offſpring: and they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes,* Ezek. xi. 19. *And I will put a new ſpirit within you.* And chap. xxxvi. 26. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you, and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.* Hoſ. xiv. 5, 6. *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael: he ſhall grow as the lily, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the olive-tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon:* and ſo it is. The immediate efficiency of the revival of our ſouls, is from and by the Holy Spirit. But the inquiry is, In *what way*, or by *what means* we may obtain the ſupplies and communications of him unto this end? This the apoſtle declares in the place inſiſted on; *We beholding the glory of Chriſt in a glaſs, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is in the exerciſe of faith on Chriſt, in the way before deſcribed, that the Holy Spirit puts forth his renewing, transforming power in and upon our ſouls. This therefore is that alone which will retrieve Chriſtians from their preſent decays and deadneſs.

Some *complain* greatly of their ſtate and condition; none ſo dead, ſo dull, and ſtupid as they; they know not whether they have any ſpark of heavenly life left in them; ſome make weak and faint endeavours for a recovery, which are like the attempts of a man in a dream, wherein he ſeems to uſe great endeavours without any ſucceſs: ſome put themſelves into multiplied duties. Howbeit, the *generality of profeſſors* ſeem to be in a pining thriftleſs condition; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe they will not ſincerely and conſtantly make uſe of the only remedy and relief; like a man that will rather chuſe to pine away in his ſickneſs, with ſome uſeleſs, tranſient refreſhments, than apply himſelf unto a known and approved remedy, becauſe, it may be, the uſe of it is unſuited unto ſome of his preſent occaſions. Now this is not to live in the exerciſe of faith in Chriſt Jeſus: this himſelf aſſure us of, John xv. 4, 5. *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

There is a twofold *coming unto Chriſt* by believing. The firſt is, that *we may have life*; that is, a ſpring and principle of ſpiritual life communicated unto us from him, *for he is our life*, Col. iii. 3. and *becauſe he liveth, we live alſo*, John xiv. 19.; yea, it is not ſo much *we that live, as he that liveth in us*, Gal. ii. 19, 20.: and unbelief is a *not coming unto him*, that we may have life, John v. 40. But ſecondly, there is alſo a coming unto him by believers in the actual exerciſe of faith, that they may *have this life more abundantly*, John x. 10. that is, ſuch ſupplies of grace as may keep their ſouls in a healthy, vigorous acting of all the powers of ſpiritual life. And as he reproacheth ſome that they would not *come unto him that they might have life*, ſo he may juſtly reprove us all, that we do not *ſo come unto him* in the actual exerciſe of faith, as that we might *have this life more abundantly*.

Secondly, When the Lord Chriſt is near us, and we do behold his glory, he will frequently communicate *ſpiritul refreſhment* in peace, conſolation, and joy unto our ſouls. We ſhall not only hereby have our graces excited with reſpect unto him as their object, but be made ſenſible of his actings *towards us*, in the communications of himſelf and his love unto us. When the Sun of righteouſneſs ariſeth on any ſoul, or makes any near approach thereunto, it ſhall find *healing under his wings*; his beams of grace ſhall convey by his Spirit, holy ſpiritual refreſhment thereunto: for he is preſent with us by his Spirit, and theſe are his fruits and effects as he is Comforter, ſuited unto his office, as he is promiſed unto us.

Many love to walk in a very careleſs unwiſe profeſſion. So long as they can hold out in the performance of outward duties, they are very regardleſs of the greateſt evangelical privileges; of thoſe things which are the marrow of divine promiſes, all real endeavours of a vital communion with Chriſt: ſuch are ſpiritual peace, refreſhing conſolations, ineffable joys, and the bleſſed compoſure of aſſurance. Without ſome taſte and experience of theſe things, profeſſion is heartleſs, lifeleſs, uſeleſs; and religion itſelf a dead carcaſe, without an animating ſoul. The peace which ſome enjoy is a mere ſtupidity. They judge not theſe things to be real, which are the ſubſtance of Chriſt's preſent reward; and a renunciation whereof would deprive the church of its principal ſupportments and encouragements in all its ſufferings. It is a great evidence of the power of unbelief, when we can ſatisfy ourſelves without an experience in our own hearts of the great things in this kind of *joy, peace, conſolation, aſſurance*, that are promiſed in

the goſpel. For how can it be ſuppoſed that we do indeed believe the promiſes of things future, namely, of heaven, immortality, and glory, the faith whereof is the foundation of all religion, when we do not believe the promiſes of the *preſent reward* in theſe ſpiritual privileges? And how ſhall we be thought to believe them, when we do not endeavour after an experience of the things themſelves in our own ſouls, but are even contented without them? But herein men deceive themſelves. They would very deſirouſly have evangelical joy, peace, and aſſurance, to countenance them in their evil frames, and careleſs walking. And ſome have attempted to reconcile theſe things unto the ruin of their ſouls. But it will not be. Without the diligent exerciſe of the grace of obedience, we ſhall never enjoy the grace of conſolation. But we muſt ſpeak ſomewhat of theſe things afterwards.

It is peculiarly, in the *view of the glory of Chriſt*, in his approaches unto us, and abiding with us, that we are made partakers of evangelical peace, conſolation, joy, and aſſurance. Theſe are a part of the royal train of his graces, of the reward wherewith he is accompanied; *His reward is with him.* Whereever he is graciouſly preſent with any, theſe things are never wanting in a due meaſure and degree, unleſs it be by their own fault, or for their trial. In theſe things doth he give the church of his loves, Cant. vii. 12. *There will I give thee my loves.* For, *if any man*, ſaith he, *loveth me, I will love him, and manifeſt myſelf unto him*, John xiv. 21.; *yea, I and the Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, ver. 23.; and that ſo as to *ſup with him*, Rev. iii. 20.; which, on his part, can be only by the communication of thoſe ſpiritual refreſhments. The only inquiry is, By what *way* and *means* we do receive them? Now, I ſay, this is in and by our *beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith*, 1 Pet. i. 9, 10. Let that glory be rightly ſtated, as before laid down; the glory of his perſon, his office, his condeſcenſion, exaltation, love, and grace. Let faith be fixed in a view and contemplation of it, mix itſelf with it as repreſented in the glaſs of the goſpel, meditate upon it, embrace it, and virtue will proceed from Chriſt, communicating ſpiritual, ſupernatural refreſhment and joy unto our ſouls. Yea, in ordinary caſes, it is impoſſible that believers ſhould have a *real proſpect of this glory* at any time, but that it will in ſome meaſure affect their hearts with a ſenſe of his love, which is the ſpring of all conſolation in them. In the exerciſe of faith on the diſcoveries of the glory of Chriſt made unto us in the goſpel, no man ſhall ever totally want ſuch inti-

mations of his love, yea ſuch effuſions of it in his heart, as ſhall be a living ſpring of thoſe ſpiritual refreſhments, John iv. 14. *But the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life.* Rom. v. 5. *The love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us.* When therefore we loſe theſe things as unto a ſenſe of them in our ſouls, it is evident that the Lord Chriſt is withdrawn, and that we do not behold his glory.

But I cannot here avoid another ſhort digreſſion. There are thoſe by whom all theſe things are derided, as diſtempered fancies and imaginations; yea, ſuch things have been ſpoken and written of them, as contain a virtual renunciation of the goſpel, the powers of the world to come, and the whole work of the Holy Ghoſt as the Comforter of the church. And hereby all real intercourſe between the *perſon of Chriſt* and the ſouls of them that do believe, is utterly overthrown; reducing all religion to an outward ſhew and pageantry, fitter for a ſtage than that temple of God which is in the minds of men. According unto the ſentiments of theſe *profane ſcoffers*, there is no ſuch thing as the *ſhedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt*; nor as the *witneſſing of the Spirit of God with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God*; from which theſe ſpiritual joys and refreſhments are inſeparable, as their neceſſary effects: no ſuch thing as the *lifting up of the light of God's countenance upon us, which will put gladneſs into our hearts*; that gladneſs which comprizeth all the things mentioned: no ſuch thing, as *rejoicing upon believing, with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*: no ſuch thing as *Chriſt's ſhewing and manifeſting himſelf unto us, ſupping with us*, and *giving us of his loves*: that the divine promiſes of a *feaſt of fat things, and wines well refined* in goſpel-mercies, are empty and inſignificant words: that all thoſe raviſhing joys and exultations of ſpirit that multitudes of faithful *martyrs* of old, and in later ages, have enjoyed by a view of the glory of God in Chriſt, and a ſenſe of his love, whereunto they gave teſtimony unto their laſt moments, in the midſt of their torments, were but fancies and imaginations. But it is the height of impudence in theſe profane ſcoffers, that they proclaim their own ignorance of thoſe things which are the real powers of our religion.

Others there are, who will not *deny the truth* of theſe things; they dare not riſe up in contradiction unto thoſe expreſs teſtimonies of the ſcripture, wherewith they are confirmed; and they do ſuppoſe that ſome are partakers of them, at leaſt they were ſo *formerly*; but as for their parts, they have no experi-

ence of them, nor do judge it their duty to endeavour after it: they can make a ſhift to live on hopes of heaven and future glory; as unto what is preſent, they deſire no more, but to be found in the performance of ſome duties in anſwer unto their convictions, which gives them that ſorry peace which they do enjoy. So do many countenance themſelves in their ſpiritual ſloth and unbelief, keeping themſelves at liberty to ſeek for refreſhment and ſatisfaction in other things, whilſt thoſe of the goſpel are deſpiſed. And theſe things are inconſiſtent. While men look for their *chief refreſhment* and ſatisfaction in temporal things, it is impoſſible they ſhould ſeek after thoſe that are ſpiritual in a due manner. And it muſt be confeſſed, that when we have a due regard unto ſpiritual, evangelical conſolations and joys, it will abate and take off our affections unto, and ſatisfaction in preſent enjoyments, Phil. iii. 8, 9. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.*

But there is no more ſacred truth than this, That where Chriſt is preſent with believers, where he is not withdrawn for a ſeaſon from them, where they live in the view of his glory by faith, as it is propoſed unto them in the goſpel, he will give unto them at his own ſeaſons ſuch intimations of his love, ſuch ſupplies of his Spirit, ſuch holy joys and rejoicings, ſuch repoſe of ſoul in aſſurance, as ſhall refreſh their ſouls, fill them with joy, ſatisfy them with ſpiritual delight, and quicken them unto all acts of holy communion with himſelf.

Let no ſuch *diſhonour* be reflected on the goſpel, that whereas the faith of it, and obedience unto it, are uſually accompanied with outward troubles, afflictions, perſecution, and reproaches, as we are foretold they ſhould be; that it doth not by its inward conſolations and divine refreſhments, outbalance all thoſe evils which we may undergo upon the account of it. So to ſuppoſe, is expreſsly contrary to the promiſe of Chriſt himſelf, who hath aſſured that even, *even now in this life*, in this world, diſtinct from eternal life in the world to come, *we ſhall receive an hundred fold recompenſe* for all that we can loſe or ſuffer for his ſake, Matth. xix. 29.: as alſo unto the experience of them, who in all ages have *taken joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, as knowing in themſelves*, (by the experience which they have of its firſt-fruits) *that they have in heaven a better and more abiding ſubſtance*, Heb. x.

34. If we come ſhort in a participation of theſe things, if we are ſtrangers unto them, the blame is to be laid on ourſelves alone, as it ſhall be immediately declared.

Now the deſign of the Lord Chriſt in thus *withdrawing* himſelf from us, and *hiding his glory* from our view, being the exerciſe of our graces, and to ſtir us up unto diligence in our inquiries after him, here lieth our guidance and direction in this caſe. Do we find ourſelves lifeleſs in the ſpiritual duties of religion? are we ſtrangers unto the heavenly viſits of conſolation and joys, thoſe *viſitations of God* whereby he preſerves our ſoul? do we ſeldom enjoy a ſenſe of the *ſhedding abroad of his love in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt?* We have no way of recovery but this alone. To this *ſtrong tower* muſt we turn ourſelves as *priſoners of hope;* unto Chriſt muſt we look that we may be ſaved. It is a ſteady view or contemplation of his glory by faith alone, that will bring in all theſe things in a lively experience in our hearts and ſouls.

Again, in the ſecond place, It is from *ourſelves* principally, if we loſe the views of the glory of Chriſt, and the exerciſe of faith be obſtructed therein. All our ſpiritual diſadvantages do ariſe from ourſelves. It is the remainder of luſts and corruptions in us, either indulged by ſloth and negligence, or excited and inflamed by Satan's temptations, that do obſtruct us in this duty. Whilſt they are in any diſorder or diſturbance, it is in vain for us to expect any clear view of this glory.

That view of the glory of Chriſt, whereof we treat, conſiſts in two things; namely, its *eſpecial nature*, and its neceſſary *adjunct* or effects. The firſt is a *ſpiritual perception or underſtanding of it as revealed in the ſcriptures.* For the revelation of the glory of his perſon, office and grace, is the principal ſubject of them, and and the principal object of our faith. And the other conſiſts in *multiplied thoughts about him*, with actings of faith in love, truſt, delight, and longing after the full enjoyment of him, 1 Pet. i. 8. *Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* If we ſatisfy ourſelves in mere notions and ſpeculations about the glory of Chriſt as doctrinally revealed unto us, we ſhall find no tranſforming power or efficacy communicated unto us thereby. But when, under the conduct of that ſpiritual light, our affections do cleave unto him with full purpoſe of heart, our minds are filled with thoughts of him, and delight in him, and faith is kept up unto its conſtant exerciſe in truſt and aſſurance on him, virtue will proceed from him to purify our hearts, increaſe our holineſs, ſtrengthen our graces, and to *fill us* ſometimes *with joy*

unſpeakable, and full of glory. This is the juſt temperature of a ſtate of ſpiritual health; namely, when our *light* of the knowledge of the glory of God in Chriſt, doth anſwer the *means* of it which we enjoy; and when our *affections* unto Chriſt do hold proportion unto that light; and this according unto the various degrees of it; for ſome have more, and ſome have leſs. Where *light* leaves the *affections* behind, it ends in formality or Atheiſm: and where *affections* outrun *light*, they ſink in the bog of ſuperſtition, doting on images and pictures, or the like. But where things go not into theſe exceſſes, it is better that our affections exceed our light on the defect of our underſtandings, than that our light exceed our affections from the corruption of our wills. In both theſe is the exerciſe of faith frequently interrupted and obſtructed by the remainder of corruption in us, eſpecially if not kept conſtantly under the *diſcipline of mortification*, but ſome way indulged unto. For,

1*ſt*, The *ſteam of their diſorder* will cloud and darken the underſtanding, that it ſhall not be able clearly to diſcern any ſpiritual object, leaſt of all the greateſt of them. There is nothing more acknowledged, even in things natural and moral, than that the diſorder of the paſſions and affections will blind, darken, and deceive the mind in its operations. And it is much more ſo in things *ſpiritual*, wherein that diſorder is an immediate rebellion againſt its proper conducting light; that is, againſt the light and rule of grace.

There are three ſorts of them unto whom the goſpel is preached, in whom there are various obſtructions of this view.

1. There is in obſtinate unbelievers a darkneſs that is an effect of the power of Satan on their minds, in blinding of them, which makes it impoſſible for them to behold any thing of the glory of Chriſt. So the apoſtle declares it, *If our goſpel be hid, it is hid unto them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them*, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Of theſe we do not ſpeak.

2. There is in all men, a *corrupt, natural darkneſs*; or ſuch a depravation of their minds by nature, as that they cannot diſcern this glory of Chriſt in a due manner. Hence *the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehendeth it not*, John i. 5. For *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Hence it is, that although Chriſt be preached among us continually, yet there are very few who diſcern any glory or beauty in him, for which *he*

ſhould be deſired, as the prophet complains, Iſa. liii. 1, 2. But I ſpeak not of this *natural darkneſs* in general. But even theſe perſons have their minds filled with prejudices againſt the goſpel, and darkened as unto the glory of Chriſt, according as corrupt luſts and affections are prevalent in them, John xii. 42, 43. *Nevertheleſs, among the chief rulers alſo, many believed on him; but becauſe of the Phariſees they did not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the ſynagogue: for they loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God.* Hence is the difference that is among the common hearers of the word. For although no man can do any thing of himſelf for the receiving of Chriſt, and the beholding of his glory, without the eſpecial aid of the grace of God, Matth. xi. 25. John vi. 44, 45.; yet ſome may make more oppoſition unto believing, and lay more hindrances in their own way, than others; which is done by their luſts and corruptions.

3. There are thoſe in whom both theſe evils are cured by faith, wherein the eyes of our *underſtandings are enlightened* to perceive and diſcern ſpiritual things, Eph. i. 16, 17, 18. But this cure is wrought in this life but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *For now we ſee through a glaſs, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am known.* And in this cure by a ſupply of a principle of ſaving light unto our minds, there are many degrees. For ſome have a clearer light than others, and thereby a more clear diſcerning of the myſtery of the wiſdom of God, and of the glory of Chriſt therein. But whatever be our attainments herein, that which obſtructs this light, that hinders it from ſhining in a due manner, *that* obſtructs and hinders faith in its view of the glory of Chriſt. And this is done by the *remainders of corrupt nature* in us, when they act in any prevalent degree; for they darken the mind, and weaken it in its ſpiritual operations: that is, where any corrupt and inordinate affections, as love of the world, cares about it, inclinations unto ſenſuality, or the like ſpiritual diſorders do prevail, faith is weakened in its ſpiritual acts, eſpecially in diſcerning and beholding the glory of Chriſt; for the mind is rendered *unſteady* in its inquiries after it, being continually diſtracted and diverted with vain thoughts and imaginations.

Perſons under the power of ſuch diſtempers, may have the ſame *doctrinal knowledge* of the perſon of Chriſt, his office and his grace, with other men, and the ſame evidence of its truth fixed on their minds; but when they endeavour a real *intuition* into the things themſelves, all things are *dark* and confuſed

unto them from the uncertainty and inſtability of their own minds.

This is the ſum of what I do deſign. We have by faith a view of the glory of Chriſt. This view is weak and unſteady from the nature of faith itſelf, and the way of its propoſal unto us as in a *glaſs*, in compariſon of what by *ſight* we ſhall attain unto. But moreover, where corrupt luſts or inordinate affections are indulged unto, where they are not continually *mortified*, where any one ſin hath a perplexing prevalency in the mind, faith will be ſo far weakened thereby, as that it can neither ſee nor meditate upon this glory of Chriſt in a due manner. This is the reaſon why the moſt are ſo weak and unſtable in the performance of this duty, yea are almoſt utterly unacquainted with it. The light of faith in the minds of men being impaired, clouded, darkened by the prevalency of unmortified luſts, it cannot make ſuch diſcoveries of this glory, as otherwiſe it would do. And this makes the preaching of Chriſt unto many ſo unprofitable as it is.

2*dly*, In the view of the glory of Chriſt which we have by faith, it will fill the mind with *thoughts and meditations* about him, whereon the affections will cleave unto him with delight. This, as was ſaid, is inſeparable from a ſpiritual view of his glory in its due exerciſe. Every one that hath it, muſt and will have many *thoughts* concerning, and great affections to him. See the deſcription of theſe things, Phil. iii. 8, 10. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them dung that I may win Chriſt: That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death.* It is not poſſible, I ſay, that we ſhould behold the glory of his perſon, office, and grace, with a due conviction of our concernment and intereſt therein, but that our minds will be greatly affected with it, and be filled with contemplations about it. Where it is not ſo with any, it is to be feared that they *have not heard his voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape*, whatever they profeſs. A ſpiritual ſight of Chriſt will aſſuredly produce love unto him; and if any man love him not, he never ſaw him, he knows him not at all. And that is no love, which doth not beget in us many *thoughts* of the object beloved. He therefore who is partaker of this grace, will think much of what Chriſt is in himſelf, of what he hath done for us, of his love and condeſcenſion, of the manifeſtation of all the glorious excellencies of the divine nature in him, exerted in a way of in-

finite wiſdom and goodneſs for the ſalvation of the church. Thoughts and meditations of theſe things will abound in us, if we are not wanting unto the due exerciſe of faith: and intenſe inflamed affections unto him, will enſue thereon, at leaſt they will be active unto our own refreſhing experience. And where theſe things are not in reality, (though in ſome they may be only in a mean and low degree), men do but deceive their own ſouls in hopes of any benefit by Chriſt or the goſpel.

This therefore is the preſent caſe. Where there are prevailing ſinful diſtempers or inordinate affections in the mind, ſuch as thoſe before mentioned, as ſelf love, love of the world, cares and fears about it, with an exceſſive valuation of relations and enjoyments; they will ſo far cumber and perplex it with a multitude of thoughts about their own objects, as ſhall leave no place for ſedate meditations on Chriſt and his glory. And where the thoughts are engaged, the affections which partly excite them, and partly are led by them, will be fixed alſo, Col. iii. 1, 2. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek theſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

This is that which, in the moſt, greatly promoteth that *imperfection* which is in our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith in this life. According to the proportion and degree of the prevalency of affections, corrupt, earthly, ſelfiſh or ſenſual, filling the heads and hearts of men with a multitude of thoughts about what they are fixed on, or inclined unto; ſo is faith obſtructed and weakened in this work and duty.

Wherefore, whereas there is a remainder of theſe luſts, as to the ſeeds of them in us all, though more mortified in ſome than in others; yet having the ſame effects in the minds of all, according to the degree of their remainder; thence it is, as from an efficacious cauſe of it, that our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, is in many ſo weak, imperfect, and unſteady.

3*dly*, We have interruption given into the work of faith herein, by the *temptations of Satan*. His original great deſign, where-ever the goſpel is preached, is to *blind the eyes of men, that the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould not ſhine unto them*, or *irradiate* their minds, 2 Cor. iv. 4. And herein he prevails unto aſtoniſhment. Let the light of the goſpel in the preaching of the word be never ſo glorious; yet by various means and artifices, he blinds the minds of the moſt, that they ſhall not behold any thing of the glory of Chriſt therein. By this means he continues his rule

in the children of diſobedience. With reſpect unto the elect, God overpowers him herein. He *ſhines into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, ver. 6. Yet will not Satan ſo give over. He will endeavour by all ways and means to trouble, diſcompoſe, and *darken* the mind even of them that believe, ſo as that they ſhall not be able to retain clear and diſtinct views of this glory. And this he doth two ways.

1. With ſome he employs all his engines, uſeth all his methods of ſerpentine ſubtilty, and caſt in his fiery darts, ſo to diſquiet, diſcompoſe and deject them, as that they can retain no comfortable views of Chriſt or his glory. Hence ariſe fears, doubts, diſputes, uncertainties, with various diſconſolations. Hereon they cannot apprehend the love of Chriſt, nor be ſenſible of any intereſt they have therein, or any refreſhing perſuaſions that they are accepted with him. If ſuch things ſometimes ſhine and beam into their minds, yet they quickly vaniſh and diſappear. Fears that they are rejected and caſt off by him, that he will not receive them here nor hereafter, do come in their place; hence they are filled with anxieties and deſpondencies, under which it is impoſſible they ſhould have any clear view of his glory.

I know that *ignorance, Atheiſm*, and *obſtinate ſecurity* in ſenſual ſins, do combine to deſpiſe all theſe things. But it is no new thing in the world, that men outwardly profeſſing Chriſtian religion, when they find gain in that godlineſs, ſhould ſpeak evil of the things which they know not, and corrupt themſelves in what they know naturally, as brute beaſts.

2. With others he deals after another manner. By various means he ſeduceth them into a *careleſs ſecurity*, wherein they promiſe peace unto themſelves, without any diligent ſearch into theſe things. Hereon they live, in a general preſumption that they ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt, although they know not how. This makes the apoſtle ſo earneſt in preſſing the duty of ſelf-examination on all Chriſtians, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. *Examine yourſelves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own ſelves: know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?* The rule of ſelf-judging preſcribed by him, is, *whether Chriſt be in us or no:* and in us he cannot be, unleſs he be received by that faith wherewith we behold his glory. For by faith we receive him, and by faith he dwelleth in our hearts, John i. 11. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name*, Eph. iii. 17. *That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith*, &c.

This is the principal way of his prevailing in the world. Multitudes by this ſeduction live in great *ſecurity* under the utmoſt neglect of theſe things. Security is granted to be an evil deſtructive of the ſouls of men; but then it is ſuppoſed to conſiſt only in impenitency for great and open ſins; but to be neglective of endeavouring an experience of the power and grace of the goſpel in our own ſouls, under a profeſſion of religion, is no leſs deſtructive and pernicious, than impenitency in any courſe of ſin.

Theſe and the like obſtructions unto faith in its operations, being added unto its own imperfections, are another cauſe whence our view of the glory of Chriſt in this world is *weak* and *unſteady*; ſo that for the moſt part it doth but tranſiently affect our minds, and not ſo fully transform them into his likeneſs, as otherwiſe it would.

It is now time to conſider that ſight which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, in compariſon of that which we have here below. Now this is *equal, ſtable, always the ſame, without interruption or diverſion.* And this is evident, both in the cauſes or means of it, as alſo in our perfect deliverance from every thing that might be an hindrance in it, or an obſtruction unto it.

1. We may conſider the *ſtate of our minds* in glory. The faculties of our ſouls ſhall then be made perfect, Heb. xii. 23. *The ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* (1.) Freed from all the clogs of the fleſh, and all its influence upon them, and reſtraint of their powers in their operations. (2.) Perfectly purified from all principles of inſtability and variety; of all inclinations unto things ſenſual and carnal, and all contrivances of ſelf-preſervation or advancement, being wholly transformed into the image of God, in ſpirituality and holineſs. And to take in the ſtate of our *bodies* after the reſurrection; even they alſo in all their powers and ſenſes, ſhall be made entirely ſubſervient unto the moſt ſpiritual actings of our minds in their higheſt elevation by the light of glory. Hereby ſhall we be enabled and fitted eternally to abide in the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, with joy and ſatisfaction. The underſtanding ſhall be always perfected with the viſion of God, and the affections cleave inſeparably to him; which is bleſſedneſs.

The very *eſſential faculties* of our ſouls in that way and manner of working, which by their union with our bodies they are confined unto, are not able to comprehend and abide conſtantly in the contemplation of this glory. So that, though our ſight of it here be dim and imperfect, and the propoſal of

it obſcure; yet from the weakneſs of our minds, we are forced ſometimes to turn aſide from what we do diſcern, as we do our bodily eyes from the beams of the ſun, when it ſhines in its brightneſs. But in this perfect ſtate they are able to behold and delight in this glory conſtantly, with eternal ſatisfaction.

But as for me, (ſaith David), *I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy likeneſs*, Pſal. xvii. 15. It is Chriſt alone, who is the *likeneſs* and *image* of God. When we *awake* in the *other world*, with our minds purified and rectified, the beholding of him ſhall be always ſatisfying unto us. There will be then no ſatiety, no wearineſs, no indiſpoſitions; but the mind being made perfect in all its faculties, powers, and operations, with reſpect unto its utmoſt end, which is the enjoyment of God, is ſatisfied in the beholding of him for evermore. And where there is perfect ſatisfaction without ſatiety, there is bleſſedneſs for ever. So the Holy Spirit affirms of the *four living creatures* in the Revelation; *They reſt not day nor night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty*, chap. iv. 8. They are continually exerciſed in the admiration and praiſes of God in Chriſt, without wearineſs or interruption. Herein ſhall we made *like unto angels*.

2. As our minds in their *eſſential powers* and faculties ſhall be enabled to comprehend and acquieſce in this glory of Chriſt, ſo the *means* or *inſtrument* of the beholding of it, is much more excellent than *faith*, and in its kind abſolutely perfect, as hath in part been before declared. This is *viſion* or *ſight*. Here we walk by *faith*, there by *ſight*. And this *ſight* is not an *external aid*, like a glaſs helping the weakneſs of the *viſive faculty* to ſee things afar off; but it is an *internal power*, or an act of the internal power of our minds, wherewith they are endued in a glorified ſtate. Hereby we ſhall be able to *ſee him face to face, to ſee him as he is*, in a direct comprehenſion of his glory; for this ſight or viſive power ſhall be given us for this very end, namely, to enable us ſo to do. Hereunto the whole glory of Chriſt is clear, perſpicuous, and evident, which will give us eternal acquieſcency therein. Hence ſhall our ſight of the glory of Chriſt be *invariable*, and always the ſame.

3. The Lord Chriſt will never in any *one inſtance*, on *any occaſion*, ſo much as one moment *withdraw himſelf* from us, or eclipſe the propoſal and manifeſtation of himſelf unto our ſight. This he doth ſometimes in this life, and it is needful for us that he ſhould do. *We ſhall be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. without end, without interruption. This is the centre of good and evil, as to the future different ſtates of men, *they*

ſhall be for ever. Eternity makes them abſolutely good on the one hand, and abſolutely evil on the other. To be in *hell* under the wrath of God, is in itſelf the greateſt penal evil; but to be there *for ever*, without the intermiſſion of miſery, or determination of time, is that which renders it the greateſt evil unto them who ſhall be in that condition. So is *eternity* the life of future bleſſedneſs. We ſhall be *ever with the Lord*, without limitation of time, without interruption of enjoyment.

There are no viciſſitudes in the heavenly ſtate. The New Jeruſalem hath no temple in it, *for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple thereof*, Rev. xxi. 22. There is no need of inſtituted means of worſhip, nor of ordinances of divine ſervice; for we ſhall need neither increaſe of grace, nor excitations unto its exerciſe. The conſtant, immediate, uninterrupted enjoyment of God and the Lamb, ſupplieth all. And it hath *no need of the ſun, nor of the moon to ſhine in it; for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.* The light of the ſun is excellent; howbeit, it hath its ſeaſons, after it hath ſhone in its brighteſt luſtre, it gives place to the night and darkneſs: ſo is the light of the *moon* of great uſe in the night; but it hath its ſeaſons alſo. Such is the light we have of the glory of God and the Lamb in this world. Sometimes it is as the light of the *ſun*, which under the goſpel is *ſevenfold*, as the *light of the ſeven days* in one, in compariſon of the law, Iſa. xxx. 26.: ſometimes as the light of the *moon*, which giveth relief in the night of temptations and trials. But it is not conſtant; we are under a viciſſitude of light and darkneſs, views of Chriſt, and a loſs of him. But in heaven, the perpetual preſence of Chriſt with his ſaints, makes it always *one noon* of light and glory.

4. This *viſion* is not in the leaſt liable unto any weakenings from *internal defects*, nor any *aſſaults from temptations*, as is the *ſight* of faith in this life. No doubts or fears, no diſturbing darts or injections ſhall there have any place. There ſhall no habit, no quality, no inclination or diſpoſition remain in our ſouls, but what ſhall eternally lead us unto the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, with delight and complacency; nor will there be any defect in the gracious powers of our ſouls, as unto a perpetual exerciſe of them. And as unto all other *oppoſing enemies*, we ſhall be in a perpetual triumph over them, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopped

for ever, and the voice of the ſelf-avenger ſhall be heard no more. Wherefore the *viſion* which we ſhall have in heaven of the glory of Chriſt, is *ſerene*: always the ſame, always new and indeficient, wherein nothing can diſturb the mind in the moſt perfect operations of a bleſſed life. And when all the faculties of the ſoul can without any internal weakneſs or external hindrances exerciſe their moſt perfect operations on the moſt perfect Object; therein lies all the *bleſſedneſs* which our nature is capable of. Wherefore, whenever in this life we attain any comfortable refreſhing view of the glory of Chriſt, by the exerciſe of faith on the revelation of it, with a ſenſe of our intereſt therein, we cannot but long after, and deſire to come unto this more perfect, abiding, invariable aſpect of it.

CHAP. XIV.

Other differences between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, and by ſight in heaven.

AMONG the many other *differences* which might be inſiſted on, (although the greateſt of them are unto us at preſent incomprehenſible, and ſo not to be inquired into), I ſhall name two only, and ſo put a cloſe to this diſcourſe.

Firſt, In the view which we have here of the glory of Chriſt by faith, we gather things as it were *one by one*, *in ſeveral parts and parcels*, out of the ſcripture; and comparing them together in our minds, they become the object of our preſent ſight, which is our ſpiritual comprehenſion of the things themſelves. We have no propoſal of the glory of Chriſt unto us by viſion or illuſtrious appearance of his perſon, as Iſaiah had of old, chap. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4, or as John had in the Revelation, chap. i. verſe 13, 14, 15, 16. We need it not, it would be of no advantage unto us: for as unto the aſſurance of our faith, we have a *word of prophecy* more uſeful unto us than a *voice from heaven*, 2 Pet. i. 17, 18, 19. And of thoſe who received ſuch viſions, though of eminent uſe unto the church, yet as unto themſelves, one of cried out, *Wo is me, I am undone*; and the other *fell as dead at his feet*. We are not able in this life to bear ſuch glorious repreſentations of him, unto our edification.

And as we have on ſuch external propoſals of his glory unto us in *viſions*, ſo neither have we any *new revelations* of him by *immediate inſpiration*. We can ſee nothing of it, know nothing of it, but what is propoſed unto us in the ſcripture, and that as it

is propoſed. Nor doth the ſcripture itſelf in any one place, make an entire propoſal of the glory of Chriſt, with all that belongs unto it; nor is it capable of ſo doing; nor can there be any ſuch repreſentation of it unto our capacity on this ſide heaven. If all the light of the heavenly *luminaries* had been contracted into one, it would have been deſtructive, not uſeful to our ſight; but being by divine wiſdom diſtributed into *ſun*, *moon*, and *ſtars*, each giving out his own proportion, it is ſuited to declare the glory of God, and to enlighten the world: ſo if the whole revelation of the glory of Chriſt, and all that belongs unto it, had been committed into one *ſeries and contexture of words*, it would have overwhelmed our minds, rather than enlightened us. Wherefore God hath diſtributed the light of it through the whole *firmament* of the books of the Old and New Teſtament, whence it communicates itſelf by various parts and degrees unto the proper uſe of the church. In one place we have a deſcription of his *perſon*, and the glory of it; ſometimes in words plain and proper, and ſometimes in great variety of *allegories*, conveying an heavenly ſenſe of things unto the minds of them that do believe; in others, of his *love* and *condeſcenſion* in his office, and his glory therein. His *humiliation*, *exaltation*, and *power*, are in like manner in ſundry places repreſented unto us. And as *one ſtar differeth from another in glory*; ſo it was one way whereby God repreſented the glory of Chriſt in types and ſhadows under the Old Teſtament, and another wherein it is declared in the New. Illuſtrious teſtimonies upon all theſe things are planted up and down in the ſcripture, which we may collect as choice flowers in the paradiſe of God, for the object of our faith and ſight thereby.

So the *ſpouſe* in the Canticles conſidered every part of the perſon and grace of Chriſt diſtinctly by itſelf; and from them all, concludes that *he is altogether lovely*, chap. v. 10.—16. So ought we to do in our ſtudy of the ſcripture, to find out the revelation of the glory of Chriſt, which is made therein, as did the prophets of old, as unto what they themſelves received by immediate inſpiration. *They ſearched diligently what the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory which ſhould enſue*, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. But this ſeeing of Chriſt by parts in the revelation of him, is one cauſe why we ſee him here but in part.

Some ſuppoſe that by *chopping*, and *painting*, and *gilding*, they can make an image of Chriſt that ſhall perfectly repreſent him to their ſenſes and carnal affections, from head to foot: but they *feed on aſhes*, and have *a lie in their right hand*. *Jeſus Chriſt is*

evidently crucified before our eyes in the ſcripture, Gal. iii. 1.; ſo alſo is he evidently exalted, and glorified therein: and it is the wiſdom of faith to gather into one thoſe *parcelled deſcriptions* that are given of him, that they may be the object of its view and contemplation.

In the viſion which we ſhall have *above*, the whole glory of Chriſt will be at *once* and *always* repreſented unto us; and we ſhall be enabled in one act of the light of glory to comprehend it. Here indeed we are at a loſs; our minds and underſtandings fail us in their contemplations. It will not yet enter into our hearts to conceive what is the beauty, what is the glory of this complete repreſentation of Chriſt unto us. To have at *once* all the glory of what he is, what he was in his outward ſtate and condition, what he did and ſuffered, what he is exalted unto, his love and condeſcenſion, his myſtical union with the church, and the communication of himſelf unto it, with the *recapitulation* of all things in him; and the glory of God, even the Father, in his wiſdom, righteouſneſs, grace, love, goodneſs, power, ſhining forth eternally in him, in what he is, hath done, and doth, all preſented unto us in *one view*, all comprehended by us at once, is that which at preſent we cannot conceive. We can long for it, pant after it, and have ſome foretaſtes of it; namely, of that ſtate and ſeaſon, wherein our whole ſouls in all their powers and faculties, ſhall conſtantly, inſeparably, eternally cleave by love unto whole Chriſt in the ſight of the glory of his perſon and grace, until they are watered, diſſolved and inebriated in the waters of life, and the rivers of pleaſure that are above for evermore. So muſt we ſpeak of the things which we admire, which we adore, which we love, which we long for, which we have ſome foretaſtes of in ſweetneſs ineffable, which yet we cannot comprehend.

Theſe are ſome few of thoſe things whence ariſeth the difference between that view which we have here of the glory of Chriſt, and that which is reſerved for heaven; namely, ſuch as are taken from the difference between the *means* or *inſtruments* of the one and the other, *faith* and *ſight*.

In the *laſt* place, the great difference between them, conſiſts in, and is manifeſted by their *effects*. Hereof I ſhall give ſome few inſtances, and cloſe this diſcourſe.

Firſt, The viſion which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, and of the glory of the immenſe God in him, is perfectly and abſolutely *transforming*. It doth change us wholly into the image of Chriſt. *When we ſhall ſee him, we ſhall be as he is: we ſhall be like him, becauſe we ſhall ſee him*, 1 John iii. 2. But

although the cloſing, perfecting act of this *transformation* be an act of ſight, or the ſight of glory; yet there are many things towards it, or degrees in it, which we may here take notice of in our way.

1. The ſoul upon its *departure from the body*, is immediately freed from all the weakneſs, diſability, darkneſs, uncertainties and fears, which were impreſſed on it from the fleſh; wherewith it was in the ſtricteſt union. The image of the firſt Adam as fallen, is then aboliſhed. Yea, it is no only freed from all irregular ſinful diſtempers cleaving to our nature as corrupted, but from all thoſe *ſinleſs grievances* and infirmities which belong unto the original conſtitution of it. This neceſſarily enſues on the *diſſolution of the perſon* in order unto a bleſſed ſtate. The firſt entrance by mortality into immortality, is a ſtep towards glory. The eaſe which a bleſſed ſoul finds in a deliverance from this encumbrance, is a door of entrance into eternal reſt. Such a change is made in that, which in itſelf is the centre of all evil, namely, *death*, that it is made a means of freeing us from all the remainders of what is evil.

For this doth not follow abſolutely on the nature of the thing itſelf. A *mere diſſolution* of our natures can bring no advantage with it, eſpecially as it is a part of the curſe. But it is from the ſanctification of it by the death of Chriſt. Hereby that which was God's ordinance for the infliction of judgement, becomes, an effectual means for the communication of mercy, 1 Cor. xv. 54. *So when this corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality, then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in victory.* It is by virtue of the death of Chriſt alone, that the ſouls of believers are freed by death from all impreſſions of ſin, infirmity and evils, which they have had from the fleſh, which were their burden, under which they groaned all their days. No man knows in any meaſure the excellency of this privilege, and the dawnings of glory which are in it, who hath not been wearied, and even worn out, through long conflicting with the body of death. The ſoul hereon being freed from all annoyances, all impreſſions from the fleſh, is expedite and enlarged unto the exerciſe of all its gracious faculties, as we ſhall ſee immediately.

With wicked men it is not ſo. Death unto them is a curſe; and the curſe is the means of the conveyance of all evil, and not deliverance from any. Wherein they have been warmed and refreſhed by the influences of the fleſh, they ſhall be deprived of it. But their ſouls in their ſeparate ſtate, are perpetually haraſſed with the *diſquieting paſſions* which have been

impreſſed on their minds by their corrupt fleſhly luſts. In vain do ſuch perſons look for relief by death. If there be any thing remaining of preſent good and uſefulneſs to them, they ſhall be deprived of it. And their freedom for a ſeaſon from bodily pains, will no way lie in the balance againſt that confluence of evils which death will let in upon them.

2. The *ſpirits of juſt men* being freed by death from the clog of the fleſh, not yet refined; all the faculties of their ſouls, and *all the graces in them*, as faith, love, and delight, are immediately ſet at liberty, enabled conſtantly to exerciſe themſelves on God in Chriſt. The end for which they were created, for which our nature was endued with them, was, that we might adhere unto God by them, and come unto the enjoyment of him. Being now freed wholly from all that impotency, perverſeneſs, and diſability unto this end, with all the effects of them, which came upon them by the *fall*; they are carried with a full ſtream towards God, cleaving unto him with the moſt intenſe embraces. And all their actings towards God, ſhall be natural, with facility, joy, delight and complacency. We know not yet the excellency of the operations of our ſouls in divine things, when diſburdened of their preſent weight of their fleſh. And this is a ſecond ſtep towards the conſummation of glory. For,

In the *reſurrection of the body*, upon its full redemption, it ſhall be ſo purified, ſanctified, glorified, as to give no obſtruction unto the ſoul in its operations, but be a bleſſed organ for its higheſt and moſt ſpiritual actings. The *body* ſhall never more be a trouble, a burden unto the ſoul, but an aſſiſtant in its operations, and participant of its bleſſedneſs. Our eyes were made to *ſee our Redeemer*, and our other ſenſes to receive impreſſions from him, according unto their capacity. As the bodies of wicked men ſhall be reſtored unto them to increaſe and complete their miſery in their ſuffering; ſo ſhall the bodies of the juſt be reſtored unto them, to heighten and conſummate their bleſſedneſs.

3. Theſe things are *preparatory* unto glory. The complete communication of it, is by the *infuſion of a new heavenly light* into the mind, enabling us to ſee the Lord Chriſt as he is. The ſoul ſhall not be brought into the immediate preſence of Chriſt, without a *new power* to behold him, and the immediate repreſentation of his glory. Faith now doth ceaſe as unto the manner of its operation in this life, whilſt we are abſent from Chriſt. This *light of glory* ſucceeds into its room, fitted for that ſtate and all the ends of it, as *faith* is for that which is preſent. And,

4. In the *firſt operation* of this light of glory, believers ſhall ſo behold the glory of Chriſt, and the glory of God in him, as that therewith, and thereby they ſhall be immediately and univerſally *changed into his likeneſs.* They ſhall be as he is, when they ſhall ſee him as he is There is no growth in glory, as unto *parts*, there may be as unto *degrees.* Additions may be outwardly made unto what is at firſt received, as by the reſurrection of the body; but the internal light of glory, and its transforming efficacy, is capable of no degrees, though new revelations may be made unto it, unto eternity. For the infinite fountain of life, and light, and goodneſs, can never be fathomed, much leſs exhauſted. And what God ſpake on the entrance of ſin, by the way of contempt and reproach, *Behold, the man is become like one of us*, upbraiding him with what he had fooliſhly deſigned; on the accompliſhment of the work of his grace, he ſays in love and infinite goodneſs, *Man is become like one of us*, in the perfect reſtoration of our image in him. This is the firſt effect of the light of glory.

Faith alſo in beholding the glory of Chriſt in this life, is accompanied with a *transforming efficacy*, as the apoſtle expreſsly declares, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is the *principle* from whence, and the *inſtrumental cauſe* whereby all ſpiritual change is wrought in us in this life; but the work of it is imperfect; firſt, becauſe it is *gradual*, and then becauſe it is *partial.*

1. As unto the *manner* of its operation, it is *gradual*, and doth not at once transform us into the image of Chriſt. Yea, the degrees of its progreſs therein, are unto us for the moſt part impereeptible. It requires much ſpiritual wiſdom and obſervation, to obtain an *experience* of them in our ſouls. *The inward man is renewed day by day*, whilſt we behold theſe inviſible things, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17, 18.; but how? even as the *outward man* decays by age, which is by inſenſible degrees and alterations. Such is the *transformation* which we have by faith, in its preſent view of the glory of Chriſt. And according to our experience of its efficacy herein, is our evidence of its truth and reality in the beholding of him. No man can have the leaſt ground of aſſurance that he hath ſeen Chriſt and his glory by faith, without ſome *effects* of it in changing him into his likeneſs. For as on the touch of his garment by the woman in the goſpel, virtue went out from him to heal her infirmity; ſo upon this view of faith, an influence of *transforming* power will proceed from Chriſt unto the ſoul.

2. As unto the *event* it is but *partial*. It doth not bring this work unto perfection. The change wrought by it is indeed great and glorious; or as the apoſtle ſpeaks, it is *from glory to glory*, in a progreſs of glorious grace: but *abſolute perfection* is reſerved for viſion. As unto divine worſhip, *perfection was not by the law*; it did many things preparatory unto the revelation of the will of God concerning it, but it *made nothing perfect*: ſo *abſolute perfection* in holineſs, and the reſtoration of the image of God, is not by the goſpel, is not by faith; however, it gives us many preparatory degrees unto it, as the apoſtle fully declares, Phil. iii. 10.—14. *That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead: not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which alſo I am apprehend of Chriſt Jeſus. Brethren, I count not myſelf to have apprehend: but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Secondly, *Viſion* is *beatifical*, as it is commonly called, and that not amiſs. It gives perfect reſt and bleſſedneſs unto them in whom it is. This may be a little opened in the enſuing obſervations.

1. There are *continual operations* of God in Chriſt, in the ſouls of them that are glorified, and communications from him unto them. For all creatures muſt eternally live even in heaven, in dependence on him who is the eternal foundation of being, life, goodneſs, and bleſſedneſs unto all. As we cannot ſubſiſt one moment in our beings, lives, ſouls, bodies, the inward or outward man, without the continual actings of divine power in us, and towards us; ſo in in the glorified ſtate, our *all* ſhall depend eternally on divine power and goodneſs, communicating themſelves unto us, for all the ends of our bleſſed ſubſiſtence in heaven.

2. What is the *way and manner* of theſe communications, we cannot comprehend. We cannot indeed fully underſtand the nature and way of his *ſpiritual communications* unto us in this life. We know theſe things by their ſigns, their outward means, and principally by the effects they produce in the real change of our natures: but in themſelves we ſee but little of them. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and we hear the ſound thereof, but we know not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit*, John iii. 8. All God's

real operations in heaven and earth are incomprehenſible, as being acts of infinite power, and we cannot ſearch them out unto perfection.

3. All *communications* from the divine Being and infinite fulneſs in heaven unto glorified ſaints, are in and through Chriſt Jeſus, who ſhall ever be the *medium* of communication between God and the church, even in glory. All things being *gathered into one head* in him, even things in heaven, and things in earth; that head being in immediate dependence on God, this order ſhall never be diſſolved, Eph. i. 10, 11. 1 Cor. iii. 23. And on theſe communications from God through Chriſt, depends entirely our continuance in a ſtate of bleſſedneſs and glory. We ſhall no more be ſelf-ſubſiſtent in glory, than we are in nature or grace.

4. The way on our part whereby we ſhall receive theſe communications from God by Chriſt, which are the eternal ſprings of life, peace, joy and bleſſedneſs, is this *viſion*, the *ſight* whereof we ſpeak. For as it is expreſsly aſſigned thereunto in the ſcripture; ſo whereas it contains the perfect operation of our minds and ſouls in a perfect ſtate, on the moſt perfect Object, it is the only means of our bleſſedneſs. And this is the true cauſe, whence there neither is, nor can be any *ſatiety* or wearineſs in heaven, in the eternal contemplation of the ſame glory. For not only the *Object* of our ſight is abſolutely infinite, which can never be ſearched into the bottom, yea, is *perpetually new* unto a finite underſtanding; ſo our *ſubjective* bleſſedneſs conſiſting in continual freſh communications from the infinite fulneſs of the divine nature, derived unto us through *viſion*, is always *new*, and always will be ſo to eternity. Herein ſhall all the ſaints of God drink of the *rivers of pleaſure* that are at his right hand, be ſatisfied with his likeneſs, and refreſh themſelves in the eternal ſprings of life, light, and joy for evermore.

This *effect*, that view which we have by faith of the glory of Chriſt in this world, doth not produce. It is *ſanctifying*, not *glorifying*. The beſt ſaints are far from a perfect or *glorified ſtate* in this life: and that not only on the account of the *outward evils*, which in their perſons they are expoſed unto; but alſo of the weakneſs and imperfection of their inward ſtate in grace. Yet we may obſerve ſome things unto the *honour* of faith in them who have received it. As,

1. In its due exerciſe on Chriſt, it will give unto the ſouls of believers ſome *previous participation* of future glory working in them *diſpoſitions* unto, and *preparation* for the enjoyment of it.

2. There is no *glory*, no *peace*, no *joy*, no ſatisfaction in this

world, to be compared with what we receive by that weak and *imperfect view* which we have of the glory of Chriſt by faith. Yea, all the joys of the world are a thing of nought, in compariſon of what we ſo receive.

3. It is ſufficient to give us ſuch a *perception*, ſuch a *foretaſte* of future bleſſedneſs in the enjoyment of Chriſt, as may continually ſtir us up to breathe and pant after it. But it is not *beatifical*.

Other differences of an alike nature, between our *beholding of the glory of Chriſt* in this life by faith, and that *viſion* of it which is reſerved for heaven, might be inſiſted on; but I ſhall proceed no further. There is nothing farther for us to do herein, but that that now and always we ſhut up all our meditations concerning it, with the *deepeſt ſelf-abaſement*, out of a ſenſe of our unworthineſs and inſufficiency to comprehend thoſe things, *admiration* of that excellent glory which we cannot comprehend, and *vehement longings* for that ſeaſon when we ſhall *ſee him as he is*, be *ever with him*, and know him, even as we are known.

PART II.

THE APPLICATION OF THE FOREGOING MEDITATIONS CONCERNING THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

CHAP. XV.

An exhortation unto ſuch as are not yet partakers of Chriſt.

THAT which remains, is to make ſome application of the glorious truth inſiſted on unto the ſouls of them that are concerned. And what I have to offer unto that end, I ſhall diſtribute under *two heads*. The *firſt* ſhall be with reſpect unto them who are yet *ſtrangers* from this holy and glorious One, who are not yet made partakers of him, nor have any eſpecial intereſt in him. And the *ſecond* ſhall be directed unto *believers*, as a guide and aſſiſtance unto their *recovery from ſpiritual decays, and the revival of a ſpring of vigorous grace, holineſs, and obedience in them.*

For the firſt of theſe, although it ſeems not directly to lie in our way, yet it is ſuited unto the method of the goſpel, that wherever there is a declaration of the excellencies of Chriſt, in his perſon, grace, or office, it ſhould be accompanied with an invitation and exhortation unto ſinners to come unto him. This method he himſelf firſt made uſe of, Matth. xi. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.* verſe 28, 29, 30. *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls. For my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light.* John vii. 37. *In the laſt day, that great day of the feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come unto me, and drink.* And he conſecrated this method unto our uſe alſo. Beſides, it is neceſſary from the nature of the things themſelves; for who can dwell on the conſideration of the glory of Chriſt, being called therewith to the declaration of it, but his own mind will engage him to invite loſt ſinners unto a participation of him? But I ſhall at preſent proceed no further in this exhortation, but only unto the propoſal of ſome of thoſe conſiderations which may prepare, incline, and diſpoſe their minds unto a cloſure with him as he is tendered in the goſpel. As,

Firſt, Let them conſider well what is their preſent ſtate with reſpect unto God and eternity. This Moſes wiſheth for the Iſraelites, Deut. xxxii. 29. *Oh that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end!* It is the greateſt folly in the world to leave the iſſues of theſe things unto an uncertain hazard. And that man who cannot prevail with himſelf ſtrictly to examine what is his ſtate and condition with reſpect unto eternity, doth never do any good, nor abſtain from any evil in a due manner. Remember therefore, that *many are called, but few are choſen.* To be called, is to enjoy all the outward privileges of the goſpel, which is all you unto whom I ſpeak can pretend unto, yet this you may do and not be choſen. Even among thoſe unto whom the word is preached, they are but few that ſhall be ſaved. In the diſtribution made by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt of the hearers of the word into four ſorts of ground, it was but one of them that received real benefit thereby; and if our congregations are no better than were his hearers, there is not above a fourth part of them that will be ſaved, it may be a far leſs number: and is it not ſtrange, that every one of them is not jealous over himſelf and his own condition? Many herein

deceive themſelves; until they fall under woful ſurpriſals. And this is repreſented in the account of the final judgement; for the generality of thoſe who have profeſſed the goſpel are introduced as complaining of their diſappointments, Matth. xxv. 10, 11, 12. *And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was ſhut. Afterwards came alſo the other virgins, ſaying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he anſwered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.* For what is there ſpoken, is only a declaration of what befel them here in the cloſe of their lives, and their perſonal judgement thereon.

Secondly, Take heed of being deluded by common preſumptions. Moſt men have ſome thoughts in general about what their ſtate is, and what it will be in the iſſue: but they make no diligent ſearch into this matter, becauſe a number of common preſumptions do immediately inſinuate themſelves into their minds for their relief; and they are ſuch, as all whoſe force and efficacy unto this end lies in this, that they differ from others, and are better than they; as they that are Chriſtians, that they are in the right way of religion, that they are partakers of the outward privileges of the goſpel, hearing the word, and participation of the ſacraments; that they have light and convictions, ſo as that they abſtain from ſin, and perform duties ſo as others do not, and the like. All thoſe with whom it is not ſo, who are behind them in theſe things, they judge to be in an ill ſtate and condition, whence they entertain good hopes concerning themſelves; and this is all that moſt truſt unto. It is not my preſent buſineſs to diſcourſe the vanity of preſumptions, it hath been done by many; I give only this warning in general unto thoſe who have the leaſt deſign or purpoſe to come to Chriſt, and to be made partakers of him, that they put no truſt in them, that they rely not on them; for if they do ſo, they will eternally deceive their ſouls. This was a great part of the preparatory miniſtry of John the Baptiſt, Matth. iii. 9. *Think not to ſay within yourſelves, we have Abraham to our father.* This was their great comprehenſive privilege, containing all the outward church and covenant advantages. Theſe they reſted in, and truſted to unto their ruin: herein he deſigned to undeceive them.

Thirdly, Conſider aright what it is to live and die without an intereſt in Chriſt, without a participation of him. Where this is not ſtated in the mind, where thoughts of it are not continually prevalent, there can be no one ſtep taken in the way towards him. Unleſs we are thoroughly convinced that

without him we are in a ſtate of apoſtacy from God, under the curſe, obnoxious unto eternal wrath, as ſome of the worſt of God's enemies, we ſhall never flee unto him for refuge in a due manner: *The whole have no need of a phyſician, but the ſick; Chriſt came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance:* and the conviction intended, is the principal end of the miniſtry of the law. The miſeries of this ſtate have been the ſubject of innumerable ſermons and diſcourſes; but there is a general miſery in the whole, that few take themſelves to be concerned therein, or apply theſe things unto themſelves. Let us tell men of it a thouſand times, yet they either take no notice of it, or believe it not, nor look on it as that which belongs unto the way and courſe of preaching, wherein they are not concerned. Theſe things it ſeems preachers muſt ſay, and they may believe them who have a mind thereunto. It is a rare thing that any one ſhall as much as ſay unto himſelf, Is it ſo with me? And if we now, together with this caution, tell the ſame men again, that whilſt they are unintereſted in Chriſt, not ingrafted into him by faith, that they run in vain, that all their labour in religion is loſt, that their duties are all rejected, that they are under the diſpleaſure and curſe of God, that their end is eternal deſtruction, which are all unqueſtionably certain, yet will they let all theſe things paſs by without any further conſideration.

But here I muſt fix with them unto whom I ſpeak at preſent; unleſs there be a full conviction in them of the woful deplorable condition of every ſoul, of whatever quality, profeſſion, religion, outward ſtate it be, who is not yet made partaker of Chriſt, all that I have further to add will be of no ſignification. Remember then that the due conſideration hereof is unto you in your ſtate, your chiefeſt concernment in this world; and be not afraid to take in a full and deep ſenſe of it, for if you are really delivered from it, and have good evidence thereof, it is nothing unto you but matter of eternal praiſe and thankſgiving. And if you are not ſo, it is highly neceſſary that your minds ſhould be poſſeſſed with due apprehenſion of it. The work of this conviction is the firſt effect of true religion; and the great abuſe of religion in the world is, that a pretence of it deludes the minds of men to apprehend that it is not neceſſary: for to be of this or that religion, of this or that way in religion, is ſuppoſed ſufficient to ſecure the eternal ſtate of men, though they are never convinced of their loſt eſtate by nature.

Fourthly, Hereon conſider the infinite condeſcenſion and

love of Chriſt, in his invitations and calls of you to come unto him for life, deliverance, mercy, grace, peace, and eternal ſalvation. Multitudes of theſe invitations and calls are recorded in the ſcripture, and they are all of them filled up with thoſe bleſſed encouragements, which divine wiſdom knows to be ſuited unto loſt convinced ſinners in their preſent ſtate and condition. It were a bleſſed contemplation to dwell on the conſideration of the infinite condeſcenſion, grace, and love of Chriſt, in his invitations of ſinners to come unto him, that they may be ſaved; of that mixture of wiſdom and perſuaſive grace that is in them; of the force and efficacy of the pleading and argument that they are accompanied withal as they are recorded in the ſcripture; but that belongs not to my preſent deſign: this I ſhall only ſay, that in the declaration and preaching of them, Jeſus Chriſt yet ſtands before ſinners, calling, inviting, encouraging of them to come unto him.

This is ſomewhat of the word which he now ſpeaks unto you, Why will ye die? why will ye periſh? why will you not have compaſſion on your own ſouls? can your hearts endure, or can your hands be ſtrong in the day of wrath that is approaching? It is but a little while before all your hopes, your reliefs, and preſumptions will forſake you, and leave you eternally miſerable: look unto me, and be ſaved: come unto me, and I will eaſe you of all ſins, ſorrows, fears, burdens, and give reſt unto your ſouls: come I intreat you, lay aſide all procraſtinations, all delays, put me off no more, eternity lies at the door; caſt out all curſed ſelf-deceiving reſerves, do not ſo hate me, as that ye will rather periſh than accept of deliverance by me.

Theſe and the like things doth the Lord Chriſt continually declare, proclaim, plead, and urge on the ſouls of ſinners; as it is fully declared, Prov. i. ver. 20. to the 24. He doth it in the preaching of the word, as if he were preſent with you, ſtood amongſt you, and ſpake perſonally to every one of you: and becauſe this would not ſuit his preſent ſtate of glory, he hath appointed the miniſters of the goſpel to appear before you, and to deal with you in his ſtead, avowing, as his own, the invitations that are given you in his name, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. *To wit, that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them: and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us: we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Conſider therefore his infinite condeſcenſion, grace, and love herein: Why all this towards you? doth he ſtand in need

of you? have you deſerved it at his hands? did you love him firſt? cannot he be happy and bleſſed without you? hath he any deſign upon you, that he is ſo earneſt in calling you unto him? Alas, it is nothing but the overflowing of mercy, compaſſion, and grace, that moves and acts him herein. Here lies the entrance of innumerable ſouls into a death and condemnation far more ſevere than thoſe contained in the curſe of the law, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. *For we are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. To the one we are the ſavour of death unto death: and to the other, the ſavour of life unto life.* In the contempt of this infinite condeſcenſion of Chriſt, in his holy invitation of ſinners to himſelf, lies the ſting and poiſon of unbelief, which unavoidably gives over the ſouls of men unto eternal ruin: and who ſhall once pity them to eternity who are guilty of it? Yea but,

Fifthly, Perhaps if you ſhould on his invitation begin to look to him, and reſolve to come to him, you are greatly afraid that when it comes to the trial he will not receive you; for no heart can conceive, no tongue can expreſs what wretched, vile, and provoking ſinners you have been: that the Lord Chriſt will receive unto him ſuch as we are, we have no hopes, or that ever we ſhall find acceptance with him: I ſay, it is not amiſs when perſons come ſo far, as to be ſenſible of what diſcouragements they have to conflict withal, what difficulties lie in their way, and what objections do ariſe againſt them; for the moſt do periſh in a ſenſeleſs ſtupidity, they will not conſider how it is with them, what is required of them, nor how it will be in the latter end; they doubt not but that either they do believe already, or can do ſo when they pleaſe; but when any comes ſo far as to charge the failure of their acceptance with Chriſt on their own unworthineſs; and ſo are diſcouraged from coming unto him, there are arguments for their conviction and perſuaſion, which nothing but the devil and unbelief can defeat: wherefore, that which is now propoſed unto conſideration in anſwer hereunto, is the readineſs of Chriſt to receive every ſinner, be he who or what he will, that ſhall come unto him: and hereof we have the higheſt evidences that divine wiſdom and grace can give unto us. This is the language of the goſpel, of all that the Lord Chriſt did or ſuffered, which is recorded therein. This is the divine teſtimony of the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and of the three that bear witneſs in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; all give their joint teſtimony that the Lord Chriſt is ready to receive all ſinners that come to him:

they who receive not this teſtimony, make God a liar, both Father, Son, and Spirit. Whatever the Lord Chriſt is in the conſtitution of his perſon, in the repreſentation of the Father, in his office, in what he did on the earth, in what he doth in heaven, proclaims the ſame truth. Nothing but curſed obſtinacy in ſin and unbelief can ſuggeſt a thought unto our minds, that he is not willing to receive us when we come unto him. Herein we are to bear teſtimony againſt the unbelief of all unto whom the goſpel is preached, that come not unto him. Unbelief acting itſelf herein, includes a contempt of the wiſdom of God, a denial of his truth or faithfulneſs, an impeachment of the ſincerity of Chriſt in his invitations, making him a deceiver, and will iſſue in an expreſs hatred of his perſon and office, and of the wiſdom of God in him. Here then you are ſhut up, you cannot from hence take any countenance unto your unbelief.

Sixthly, Conſider that he is as able to ſave us, as he is ready and willing to receive us. The teſtimonies which he hath given us unto his goodneſs and love are uncontrollable, and none dare directly to call in queſtion, or deny his power. Generally this is taken for granted by all, that Chriſt is able to ſave us if he will; yea, who ſhall queſtion his ability to ſave us, though we live in ſin and unbelief? and many expect that he will do ſo, becauſe they believe he can if he will. But indeed Chriſt hath no ſuch power, no ſuch ability; he cannot ſave unbelieving impenitent ſinners, for this cannot be done without denying himſelf, acting contrary to his word, and deſtroying his own glory. Let none pleaſe themſelves with ſuch vain imaginations; Chriſt is able to ſave all them, and only them who come to God by him. Whilſt you live in ſin and unbelief, Chriſt himſelf cannot ſave you. But when it comes to the trial in particular, ſome are apt to think, that although they will not conclude that Chriſt cannot ſave them, yet they do on various accounts ſay, that they cannot be ſaved by him. This therefore we alſo give teſtimony unto, in our exhortation to come unto him; namely, that his power to ſave thoſe that ſhall comply with his call is ſovereign, incontrollable, almighty, that nothing can ſtand in the way of. All things in heaven and earth are committed unto him, all power is his, and he will uſe it unto this end, namely, the aſſured ſalvation of all that come unto him.

Seventhly, Conſider greatly what hath been ſpoken of the repreſentation of God, and all the holy properties of his nature in him. Nothing can poſſibly gives us more encouragement

to come unto him; for we have manifeſted, that God who is infinitely wiſe and glorious, hath deſigned to exert all the holy properties of his nature, his mercy, love, grace, goodneſs, righteouſneſs, wiſdom and power in him, in and unto the ſalvation of them that do believe. Whoever therefore comes unto Chriſt by faith on this repreſentation of the glory of God in him, he aſcribes and gives unto God all that glory and honour which he aimeth at from his creatures, and we can do nothing wherewith he is pleaſed equal unto it. Every poor ſoul that comes by faith unto Chriſt, gives unto God all that glory which it is his deſign to manifeſt and be exalted in; and what can we do more? There is more glory given unto God by coming unto Chriſt in believing, than in keeping the whole law, inaſmuch as he hath more eminently manifeſted the holy properties of his nature in the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, than in giving of the law: there is therefore no man who under goſpel-invitations refuſeth to come unto, and cloſe with Chriſt by believing, but ſecretly, through the power of darkneſs, blindneſs, and unbelief, he hates God, diſlikes all his ways, would not have his glory exalted, nor manifeſted, chooſing rather to die in enmity againſt him, than to give glory to him. Do not deceive yourſelves, it is not an indifferent thing, whether you will come in unto Chriſt upon his invitations or no; a thing that you may put off from one ſeaſon unto another: your preſent refuſal of it, is as high an act of enmity againſt God, as your nature is capable of.

Eightly, Conſider that by coming unto Chriſt, you ſhall have an intereſt in all that glory which we have propoſed unto you; for Chriſt will become yours more intimately than your wives and children are yours, and ſo all his glory is yours alſo. All are apt to be affected with the good things of their relations, their grace, their riches, their beauty, their power; for they judge themſelves to have an intereſt in them, by reaſon of their relation unto them. Chriſt is nearer to believers than any natural relations are to us whatever; they have therefore an intereſt in all his glory. And is this a ſmall thing in your eyes, that Chriſt ſhall be yours, and all his glory ſhall be yours, and you ſhall have the advantage of it unto your eternal bleſſedneſs? Is it nothing unto you to continue ſtrangers from, and unintereſted in all this glory? to be left to take your portion in this world in luſts, and ſins, and pleaſures, and a few periſhing trifles, with eternal ruin in the cloſe, whilſt ſuch durable ſubſtance, ſuch riches of glory are tendered unto you?

Laſtly, Conſider the horrible ingratitude there is in a neglect

or refuſal to come in to Chriſt upon his invitation, with the doleful eternal ruin that will enſue thereon: *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?* Impenitent unbelievers under the preaching of the goſpel, are the vileſt and moſt ungrateful of all God's creation. The devils themſelves, as wicked as they are, are not guilty of this ſin, for Chriſt is never tendered unto them, they never had an offer of ſalvation on faith and repentance; this is their peculiar ſin, and will be the peculiar aggravation of their miſery unto eternity. Hear, ye deſpiſers, wonder, and periſh. The ſin of the devil is in malice and oppoſition unto knowledge, above what the nature of man is capable of in this world. Men therefore muſt ſin in ſome inſtance above the devil, or God would not give them their eternal portion with the devil and his angels: this is unbelief.

Some, it may be, will ſay, What then ſhall we do? what ſhall we apply ourſelves unto? what is it that is required of us?

1. Take the advice of the apoſtle, Heb. iii. 7, 8, 13.—*To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderneſs: but exhort one another daily while it is called, To-day; leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.* This day, even this is unto you in the tender of grace the acceptable time, this is the day of ſalvation. Others have had this day as well as you, and have miſſed their opportunity; take heed leſt it ſhould be ſo with you alſo. How if any one ſhould write it down, or peculiarly commit it to remembrance, this day there was a tender of Chriſt and ſalvation in him made unto my ſoul; from this time I will reſolve to give up myſelf unto him. And if you find your reſolutions, charge your conſciences with what you have engaged, and make yourſelves to know, that if you go back from it, is a token that you are going to ruin.

2. Conſider that it is high time for you to make ſomewhat of religion. Do not hang always in ſuſpenſe: let it not be a queſtion with yourſelves, whether you have a mind to be ſaved or no. This is as good a time and ſeaſon for a reſolution as ever you are like to have whilſt in this world. Some things, nay, many things may fall in between this and the next opportunity, that ſhall put you backward, and make your entrance into the kingdom of heaven far more difficult than ever it was; and the living in that uncertainty at beſt, which you do, of what will become of you unto eternity, is the moſt miſerable kind of life in the world. Thoſe who put far from them the evil day, and live in the purſuit of luſts and pleaſures, have ſomewhat that gives them preſent ſatisfaction, and they ſay

not, there is no hope, becauſe they find the life of the hand: but you have nothing that gives you any prevalent refreſhment, neither will your latter end be better than theirs, if you die without an intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus. Come therefore at length unto a determinate reſolution what you will do in this matter. Chriſt hath waited long for you, and who knows how ſoon he may withdraw, never to look after you any more?

Upon occaſion of the preceding *diſcourſe concerning the glory of Chriſt*, I thought it neceſſary to add unto it this brief exhortation unto faith in him, aiming to ſuit it unto the capacity of the meaneſt ſinner that is capable of any ſelf-conſideration as unto his eternal welfare. But yet a little further, to give efficacy unto this exhortation, it will be neceſſary to remove ſome of thoſe common and obvious tergiverſations that convinced ſinners do uſually betake themſelves unto, to put off a preſent compliance with the calls of Chriſt to come unto him; for although it is unbelief alone acting in the darkneſs of mens minds, and the obſtinacy of their wills, that effectually keeps off ſinners from coming unto Chriſt upon his call, yet it ſhrouds itſelf under various pretences, that it may not appear in its own ugly form; for no ſin, whereof men can be guilty of in this world, is of ſo horrible a nature, and ſo dreadful an aſpect, as is this unbelief, where a clear view of it is obtained in evangelical light: wherefore by the aid of Satan, it ſuggeſts other pleas and pretences unto the minds of ſinners, under which they may countenance themſelves in a refuſal to come to Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 4. *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* Any thing elſe it ſhall be, but not unbelief, that they all diſavow. I ſhall therefore ſpeak unto a few of thoſe tergiverſations in this caſe which are obvious, and which are exemplified in the goſpel itſelf.

I. Some do ſay on ſuch exhortations, What is it that you would have us to do? we hear the word preached, we believe it as well as we can, we do many things willingly, and abſtain from many evils diligently; what is more required of us? This is the language of the hearts of the moſt with whom in this caſe we have to do. And I ſay,

1. It is uſual with them who do ſomething in the ways of God, but not all they ſhould, and ſo nothing in a due manner, to expoſtulate about requiring of them more than they do. So the people diſpute with God himſelf, Mal. i. 6. *A ſon honoureth his father, and a ſervant his maſter: if then I be a father,*

where is mine honour? and if I be a maſter, where is my fear? ſaith the Lord of hoſts unto you, O prieſts, that deſpiſe my name: and ye ſay, Wherein have we deſpiſed thy name? chap. iii. 8. 13. *Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me: but ye ſay, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and in offerings. Your words have been ſtout againſt me, ſaith the Lord; yet ye ſay, What have we ſpoken ſo much againſt thee?* So they in the goſpel, who eſteemed themſelves to have done their duty, being preſſed unto faith by Chriſt Jeſus, aſk him with ſome indignation, *What ſhall we do, that we might work the works of God?* John vi. 28. If what we do be not enough, what is it that you require more of us? So was it with the young man, Matth. xix. 20. *What do I lack yet?* Be adviſed therefore not to be too confident of your ſtate, leſt you ſhould yet lack that one thing, the want whereof might prove your eternal ruin.

2. The things mentioned, with all of the like nature, which may be multiplied, may be where there is no one ſpark of ſaving faith. Simon Magus heard the word, and believed as well as he could; Herod heard it, and did many things gladly; and all ſorts of hypocrites do upon their convictions perform many duties, and abſtain from many ſins: ſo as that notwithſtanding this plea you may periſh for ever.

3. Where theſe things are ſincere, they belong unto the exerciſe of faith: they may be after a ſort without faith, but faith cannot be without them. But there is a fundamental act of faith, whereby we cloſe with Chriſt, whereby we receive him, that is in order of nature antecedent unto its actings in all other duties and occaſions; it is laying the foundation, other things belong to the building. This is that you are called on to ſecure, and you may know it by theſe two properties:

(1.) It is *ſingular*. So our Saviour tells the Jews, John vi. 29. *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent.* The act, work, or duty of faith in the receiving of Chriſt, is a peculiar ſingular work, wherein the ſoul yields eſpecial obedience unto God; it is not be reckoned unto ſuch common duties as thoſe mentioned, but the ſoul muſt find out wherein it hath in a ſingular manner cloſed with Chriſt upon the command of God.

(2.) It is accompanied with an univerſal ſpiritual change in the whole ſoul, 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſſed away, behold, all things are become new.* Wherefore if you would not chooſe rather to deceive and ruin your own ſouls, come to the trial, whether indeed you have received Chriſt in ſuch a ſingular transforming act

of faith; do not on ſuch pretences want a compliance with the word of exhortation propoſed unto you. But,

II. Some will ſay, they know not how to proceed in this work. They can make nothing of it; they have tried to come to this believing, but do ſtill fail in what they deſign; they go on and off, but can make no progreſs, can come to no ſatisfaction; therefore they think it beſt to let things go in general as they are, without putting themſelves to farther trouble as unto any eſpecial act of faith in the receiving of Chriſt. This is the language of mens hearts, though not of their mouths, another ſhelter of unbelief, and they act accordingly; they have a ſecret deſpondency, which keeps them ſafe from attempting a real cloſure with Chriſt on the tender of the goſpel. Something may be offered unto this diſtempered frame of mind.

1. Remember the diſciples that were fiſhing, and had toiled all night, but caught nothing, Luke v. 3, 4. Upon the coming of Chriſt unto them, he requires that they ſhould caſt out their nets once more; Peter makes ſome excuſe from the labour which they had taken in vain all night; however he would venture once more on the command of Chriſt, and had an aſtoniſhing draught of fiſhes, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Have you been wearied with diſappointments in your attempts and reſolutions? yet caſt in your net this once more upon the command of Chriſt, venture this once more to come unto him on his call and invitation, you know not what ſucceſs he may give unto you.

2. Conſider that it is not failing in this or that attempt of coming to Chriſt, but a giving over your endeavours that will be your ruin. The woman of Canaan in her great outcry to Chriſt for mercy, Matth. xv. 22. had many a repulſe: firſt it is ſaid, he anſwered her not a word; then his diſciples deſired that he would ſend her away, that ſhe might not trouble him any more; whereon he gives a reaſon why he would not regard her, or why he could juſtly paſs her by, ſhe was not an Iſraeliteſh, unto whom he was ſent; yet ſhe gives not over, but preſſing into his preſence, cries out for mercy, ver. 25. Being come to that iſſue, to try and draw out her faith to the utmoſt, which was his deſign from the beginning, he reckons her among dogs, that were not to have childrens bread given unto them. Had ſhe now at laſt given over upon this ſevere rebuke, ſhe had never obtained mercy; but perſiſting in her requeſt ſhe at laſt prevailed, ver. 27, 28. It may be you have prayed, and cried, and reſolved, and vowed, but all without ſucceſs, as you ſuppoſe; ſin hath broken through all: however, if you give not over, you ſhall prevail at laſt; you know not at what time God will

come in with his grace, and Chriſt will manifeſt his love unto you, as unto the poor woman, after many a rebuke. It may be, after all, he will do it this day, and if not, he may do it another, do not deſpond. Take that word of Chriſt himſelf for your encouragement, Prov. viii. 34. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors.* If you hear him, and wait, though you have not yet admiſſion, but are kept at the gates and poſts of the doors, yet in the iſſue you ſhall be bleſſed.

3. The rule in this caſe is, Hoſ. vi. 3. *Then ſhall we know, if we follow on to know.* Are you in the way of knowing Chriſt, in the uſe of means, hearing the word, and ſincere endeavours in holy duties? though you cannot yet attain unto any evidence that you have received him, have cloſed with him, nothing can ruin you but giving over the way wherein you are; for then ſhall you know if you follow on to know the Lord. Many can give you their experiences, that if they had been diſcouraged by preſent overwhelming difficulties, ariſing from their diſappointments, breaking of vows, relapſes into folly, they had been utterly ruined, whereas now they are at reſt and peace in the boſom of Chriſt. On a great ſurpriſal Chriſt loſt at once many diſciples, and they loſt their ſouls, John vi. 66. *They went back and walked no more with him:* take heed of the like diſcouragements.

III. Some may ſay, yea, practically they do ſay, that theſe things indeed are neceſſary; they muſt come to Chriſt by believing, or they are undone; but this is not the ſeaſon of it, there will be time enough to apply themſelves unto it when other occaſions are paſt; at preſent they have not leiſure to enter upon, and go through with this duty: wherefore they will abide in their preſent ſtate for a while, hearing and doing many things, and when time ſerves will apply themſelves unto this duty alſo.

1. This is an uncontrollably evidence of that ſottiſhneſs and folly which is come upon our nature by ſin. A depravation that the apoſtle places in the head of the evils of corrupted nature, Tit. iii. 3. *For we ourſelves alſo were ſome times fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures,* &c. Can any any thing be more fooliſh, ſottiſh, and ſtupid, than for men to put off the conſideration of the eternal concernment of their ſouls for one hour, being altogether uncertain whether they ſhall live another or no? to prefer preſent trifles before the bleſſedneſs or miſery of an immortal ſtate? For thoſe who never heard of theſe things, who never had any conviction of

ſin and jndgment, to put the evil day far from them, is not much to be admired: but for you who have Chriſt preached unto, who own a neceſſity of coming unto him, to put it off from day to day upon ſuch ſlight pretences, it is an aſtoniſhable folly. May you not be ſpoken unto in the language of the wiſdom of God, Prov. vi. 9. *How long wilt thou ſleep, O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* You come to hear the word, and when you go away the language of your hearts is, *Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep:* we will abide a little while in our preſent ſtate, and afterwards we will rouſe up ourſelves. Under this deceit do multitudes periſh every day. This is a dark ſhade, wherein curſed unbelief lies hid.

2. Conſider that this is the greateſt engine Satan makes uſe of in the world, among them that hear the word preached unto them, for the ruin of their ſouls. He hath other arts, and ways, and methods of dealing with other men, as by ſenſual and worldly luſts: but as unto them who through their convictions do attend unto the preaching of the word, this is his great and almoſt only engine for their ruin. There needs no haſte in this matter, another time will be more ſeaſonable, you may be ſure not to fail of it before you die: however, this preſent day and time is moſt unfit for it, you have other things to do, you cannot part with your preſent frame, you may come again to hear the word the next opportunity. Know aſſuredly, if your minds are influenced unto delays of coming to Chriſt by ſuch inſinuations, you are under the power of Satan, and he is like enough to hold you faſt unto deſtruction.

3. This is as evil and dangerous a poſture, or frame of mind, as you can well fall under. If you have learned to put off God, and Chriſt, and the word, for the preſent ſeaſon, and yet relieve yourſelves in this, that you do not intend like others always to reject them, but will have a time to hearken to their calls; you are ſecured and fortified againſt all convictions and perſuaſions, all fears; one anſwer will ſerve for all, within a little while you will do all that can be required of you. This is that which ruins the ſouls of multitudes every day. It is better dealing with men openly profligate, than with ſuch a trifling promiſer. See Iſa. v. 7. 10.

4. Remember that the ſcripture confines you unto the preſent day, without the leaſt intimation that you ſhall have either another day, or another tender of grace and mercy in any day, 2 Cor. vi. 2. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of ſalvation*, Heb. iii. 7. 13. chap. xii. 15. Take care leſt you

come ſhort of the grace of God, miſs of it by miſſing your opportunity. Redeem the time, or you are loſt for ever.

5. As unto the pretence of your occaſions and buſineſs, there is a ready way to diſappoint the craft of Satan in that pretence, namely, to mix thoughts of Chriſt, and the renovation of your reſolutions, either to come or to cleave unto him, with all your occaſions. Let nothing put it utterly out of your minds; make it familiar unto you, and you will beat Satan out of that ſtrong-hold, Prov. vii. 4. *Say unto wiſdom, Thou art my ſiſter; and call underſtanding thy kinſwoman.* However, ſhake yourſelves out of this duſt, or deſtruction lies at the door.

IV. It is the language of the heart of ſome, that if they give up themſelves unto a compliance with this exhortation, and go ſeriouſly about this duty, they muſt relinquiſh and renounce all their luſts and pleaſures, yea much of their converſe and ſociety, wherein they find ſo much preſent ſatisfaction, as that they know not how to part with them. If they might retain their old ways, at leaſt ſome of them, it were another matter, but this total relinquiſhment of all is very ſevere.

Anſw. 1. The Jeſuites preaching and painting of Chriſt among ſome of the Indians, concealed from them his croſs and ſufferings, telling them only of his preſent glory and power; ſo as they pretended to win them over to faith in him, hiding from them that whereby they might be diſcouraged; and ſo preached a falſe Chriſt unto them, one of their own framing. We dare do no ſuch thing for all the world; we can here uſe no condeſcenſion, no compliance, no compoſition with reſpect unto any ſin or luſt; we have no commiſſion to grant that requeſt of Lot, *Is it not a little one? let it be ſpared;* nor to come to Naaman's terms, *God be merciful to me in this thing, in all others I will be obedient.* Wherefore,

2. We muſt here be peremptory with you, whatever be the event; if you are diſcouraged by it, we cannot help it: curſed be the man that ſhall encourage you to come to Chriſt, with hopes of indulgence unto any one ſin whatever. I ſpeak not this, as though you could at once abſolutely and perfectly leave all ſin in the root and branches of it; but only you are to do it in heart and reſolution, engaging into an univerſal mortification of all ſin, as by grace from above you ſhall be enabled: but your choice muſt be abſolute, without reſerves, as to love, intereſt, and deſign; God or the world, Chriſt or Belial, holineſs or ſin; there is no medium, no terms of compoſition, 2 Cor. vi. 15, 16, 17, 18.

3. As unto what you pretend of your pleaſures, the truth

is, you never yet had any real pleaſure, nor do know what it is: how eaſy were it to declare the folly, vanity, bitterneſs, poiſon of thoſe things which you have eſteemed your pleaſures? Here alone, namely in Chriſt, and a participation of him, are true pleaſures and durable riches to be obtained; pleaſure of the ſame nature with, and ſuch as like pleaſant ſtreams flow down into the ocean of eternal pleaſures above. A few moments in theſe joys are to be preferred above the longeſt continuance in the curſed pleaſures of this world, Prov. iii. 13, —18. *Happy is the man that findeth wiſdom, and the man that getteth underſtanding, For the merchandiſe of it is better than the merchandiſe of ſilver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

V. It will be ſaid by ſome, that they do not ſee thoſe who profeſs themſelves to be believers, to be ſo much better than they are, as that you need to preſs us ſo earneſtly to ſo great a change; we know not why we ſhould not be accounted believers already as well as they. I ſhall in a few words, as well as I am able, lay this ſtumbling block out of the way, though I confeſs at this day it is weighty and cumberſome. And I ſay,

1. Among them that profeſs themſelves to be believers, there are many falſe, corrupt hypocrites; and it is no wonder that on various occaſions they lay the ſtumbling block of their iniquities before the face of others: but they ſhall bear their own burden and judgment.

2, It is acknowledged, it muſt be bewailed that ſome who have reaſon to be judged true believers, yet through their unmortified pride, or covetouſneſs, or careleſſneſs in their converſation, or vain attire, and conformity to the world, or frowardneſs, do give juſt occaſion of offence. We confeſs that God is diſpleaſed herewith, Chriſt and the goſpel diſhonoured, and many that are weak are wounded, and otherwiſe diſcouraged. But as for you, this is not your rule; this is not propoſed unto you, but that word only is ſo that will never fail you.

3. The world doth not know, nor is able to make a right judgment of believers; nor do you ſo, for it is the ſpiritual man alone that diſcerneth the things of God. Their infirmities are viſible to all, their graces inviſible; the King's daugh-

ter is glorious within. And when you are able to make a right judgment of them, you will deſire no greater advancement than to be of their ſociety, Pſal. xvi. 3.

Theſe few inſtances of the pretences wherewith unbelief covers its deformity, and hides that deſtruction wherewith it is accompanied, may ſuffice unto our preſent purpoſe; they are multiplied in the minds of men, impregnated by the ſuggeſtions of Satan on their darkneſs and folly. A little ſpiritual wiſdom will rend the vail of them all, and expoſe unbelief acting in enmity againſt Chriſt under them. But what hath been ſpoken, may ſuffice to anſwer the neceſſity of the preceding exhortation on this occaſion.

CHAP. XVI.

The ways and means of the recovery of ſpiritual decays, and of obtaining freſh ſprings of grace.

THE application of the ſame truth, in the *ſecond* place, belongs unto *believers*, eſpecially ſuch as have made any long profeſſion of walking in the ways of God and the goſpel. And that which I deſign herein, is to manifeſt, that a ſteady ſpiritual view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, will give them a gracious revival from inward decays, and freſh ſprings of grace, even in their latter days. A truth this is, as we ſhall ſee confirmed by ſcripture, with the joyful experience of multitudes of believers, and is of great importance unto all that are ſo.

There are two things, which thoſe who after a long profeſſion of the goſpel are entering into the confines of eternity, do long for and deſire. The one is, that all their breaches may be repaired, their decays recovered, their backſlidings healed: for unto theſe things they have been leſs or more obnoxious in the courſe of their walking before God. The other is, that they may have freſh ſprings of ſpiritual life, and vigorous actings of all divine graces, in ſpiritual mindedneſs, holineſs, and fruitfulneſs, unto the praiſe of God, the honour of the goſpel, and the increaſe of their own peace and joy. Theſe things they value more than all the world, and all that is in it; about theſe things are their thoughts and contrivances exerciſed night and day. Thoſe with whom it is otherwiſe, whatever they pretend, are in the dark unto themſelves, and their own condition; for it is in the nature of this grace to grow and increaſe unto the end. As rivers, the nearer they come unto the ocean whe-

ther they tend, the more they increaſe their waters, and ſpeed their ſtreams; ſo will grace flow more freely and fully in its near approaches to the ocean of glory. This is not ſaving which doth not ſo.

An experience hereof, I mean of the thriving of grace towards the end of our courſe, is that alone which can ſupport us under the troubles and temptations of life, which we have to conflict withal. So the apoſtle tells us, that this is our great relief in all our diſtreſſes and afflictions, whereon *we faint not, that as our outward man doth periſh, ſo the inward man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. If it be ſo, that in the daily decays of the outward man, in all the approaches of its diſſolution, we have inward ſpiritual revivals and renovations, we ſhall not faint in what we undergo. And without ſuch continual renovations, we ſhall faint in our diſtreſſes, whatever other things we may have, or whatever we pretend unto the contrary.

And ordinarily it is ſo in the holy, wiſe providence of God, that afflictions and troubles increaſe with age. It is ſo in an eſpecial manner with miniſters of the goſpel; they have many of them a ſhare in the lot of Peter, which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt declared unto him, John xxi. 18. *When thou waſt young, thou girdeſt thyſelf, and walkedſt whether thou wouldſt: but when thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whether thou wouldſt not.* Beſides thoſe natural diſtempers and infirmities which accompany the decays of life, troubles of life, and in their affairs do uſually grow upon them, when they look for nothing leſs, but were ready to ſay with Job, *We ſhall die in our neſt*, Job xxix. 18. So was it with Jacob after all his hard labour and travel to provide for his family, ſuch things fell out in it in his old age, as had almoſt broken his heart: And oft-times both perſecutions and public dangers do befal them at the ſame ſeaſon. Whilſt the outward man is thus periſhing, we need great ſupportment that we faint not. And this is only to be had in an experience of daily ſpiritual renovations in the inner man.

The excellency of this mercy the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth in an heavenly manner, Pſal. xcii. 12, 13, 14, 15. *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the palm-tree; he ſhall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God. They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age: they ſhall be fat, and flouriſhing: to ſhew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.*

The promiſe in the 12th verſe, reſpects the times of the

Meſſiah, or of the New Teſtament, for ſo it is propheſiedof him; *In his days ſhall the righteous flouriſh*, Pſal. lxxii. 7. namely, through the abundance of grace that ſhould be adminiſtered from his fulneſs, as John i. 16. *And of his fulneſs have all we received, and grace for grace.* Col. i. 19. *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* And herein conſiſts the glory of the goſpel, and not in outward proſperity, or external ornaments of divine worſhip. The flouriſhing of the righteous, I ſay, in grace and holineſs, is the glory of the office of Chriſt, and of the goſpel. Where this is not, there is no glory in the profeſſion of our religion. The glory of kings is in the wealth and peace of their ſubjects; and the glory of Chriſt is in the grace and holineſs of his ſubjects.

This *flouriſhing* is compared to the *palm-tree*, and the growth of the *cedar*. The *palm-tree* is of the greateſt verdure, beauty, and fruitfulneſs, and the *cedar* of the greateſt and longeſt growth of any trees. So are the *righteous* compared to the *palm-tree*, for the beauty of profeſſion, and fruitfulneſs in obedience; and unto the *cedar*, for a continual conſtant growth and increaſe in grace. Thus it is with all that are righteous, unleſs it be from their own ſinful neglect, as it is with many in this day. They are hereon rather like the *ſhrubs* and *heaths in the wilderneſs, which ſee not when good cometh*, than like the *palm-tree*, or the *cedars of Lebanon*. And hereby do men what lies in them, to obſcure the glory of Chriſt and his kingdom, as well as diſquiet their own ſouls.

The words that follow, ver. 13. *They that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God*, are not diſtinctive of ſome from other, as though ſome only of the flouriſhing righteous were ſo planted; but they are deſcriptive of them all, with an addition of the way and means whereby they are cauſed ſo to grow and flouriſh. And this is their implantation in the houſe of the Lord; that is, in the church, which is the ſeat of all the means of ſpiritual life, both as unto growth and flouriſhing, which God is pleaſed to grant unto believers. To be planted in the houſe of the Lord, is to be fixed and rooted in the grace communicated by the ordinances of divine worſhip. Unleſs we are planted in the houſe of the Lord, we cannot flouriſh in his courts; Pſal. i. 3. *And he ſhall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.* Unleſs we are partakers of the grace adminiſtered in the ordinances, we cannot flouriſh in a fruitful profeſſion. The outward participation of them is com-

mon unto hypocrites, that bear ſome leaves, but neither grow like the cedar, nor bear fruit like the palm-tree. So the apoſtle prays for believers, that Chriſt may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they may be *rooted and grounded in love*, Eph. iii. 17. *rooted, built up, and eſtabliſhed*, Col. ii. 7. The want hereof is the cauſe that we have ſo many fruitleſs profeſſors; they have entered the courts of God by profeſſion, but were never planted in his houſe by faith and love. Let us not deceive ourſelves herein; we may be entered into the church, and made partakers of the outward privileges of it, and not be ſo planted in it as to flouriſh in grace and fruitfulneſs.

That which on this occaſion I principally intend, is the grace and privilege expreſſed ver. 14. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age: they ſhall be fat, and flouriſhing.* There be three things which conſtitute a ſpiritual ſtate, or belong to the life of God. (1.) That believers be fat, that is, by the heavenly juice, ſap, or fatneſs of the true olive, of Chriſt himſelf; as Rom. xi. 17. This is the principal of ſpiritual life and grace derived from him. When this abounds in them, ſo as to give them ſtrength and vigour in the exercife of grace, to keep them from decays and withering, they are ſaid to be fat, which in the ſcripture-phraſe is ſtrong and healthy. (2.) That they flouriſh in the greeneſs (as the word is) and verdure of profeſſion; for vigorous grace will produce a flouriſhing profeſſion. (3.) That they ſtill bring forth fruit in all duties of holy obedience. All theſe are promiſed unto them even in old age.

Even trees when they grow old (the palm and the cedar) are apt to loſe of their juice and verdure; and men in old age are ſubject unto all ſorts of decays, both outward and inward. It is a rare thing to ſee a man in old age naturally vigorous, healthy, and ſtrong; and would it were not more rare to ſee any ſpiritually ſo at the ſame ſeaſon. But this is here promiſed unto believers as an eſpecial grace and privilege, beyond what can be repreſented in the growth or fruit-bearing of plants and trees.

The grace intended is, that when believers are under all ſorts of bodily and natural decays and it may be have been overtaken with ſpiritual decays alſo, there is proviſion made in the covenant to render them fat, flouriſhing, and fruitful, vigorous in the power of internal grace, and flouriſhing in the expreſſion of it in all duties of the obedience, which is that which we now inquire after. Bleſſed be God for this good word of his grace, that he hath given us ſuch encouragement againſt all the decays and temptations of old age which we have to conflict withal.

And the pſalmiſt in the next words declares the greatneſs of

this privilege: *To ſhew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.* Conſider the oppoſitions that lie againſt the flouriſhing of believers in old age, the difficulties of it, the temptations that muſt be conquered, the actions of the mind above its natural abilities which are decayed, the wearineſs that is apt to befal us in a long ſpiritual conflict, the cries of the fleſh to be ſpared, and we ſhall ſee it to be an evidence of the faithfulneſs, power, and righteouſneſs of God in covenant; nothing elſe could produce this mighty effect. So the prophet treating of the ſame promiſe, Hoſ. xiv. 4.—8. cloſeth his diſcourſe with that bleſſed remark, ver. 9. *Who is wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe things? prudent, and he ſhall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them.* Spiritual wiſdom will make us to ſee that the faithfulneſs and power of God are exerted in this work of preſerving believers flouriſhing and fruitful unto the end.

Having laid the foundation of this illuſtrious teſtimony, I ſhall further declare and confirm my intention, ſo to make way for the application of the truth under conſideration, unto this caſe, manifeſting, that the way whereby we may be made partakers of this grace, is by a ſteady view of the glory of Chriſt, as propoſed unto us in the goſpel.

There is a latter ſpring in the year, a ſpring in autumn; it is indeed for the moſt part but faint and weak, yet is it ſuch as the huſbandman cannot ſpare. And it is an evident ſign of barren ground, when it doth not put forth afreſh towards the end of the year. God the good huſbandman looks for the ſame from us, eſpecially if we had a ſummer's drought in ſpiritual decays; as the pſalmiſt complains, Pſal xxxii. 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer.* Had we not had a latter ſpring the laſt year, the land had greatly ſuffered under the drought of the ſummer. And if we have had ſuch a drought in the courſe of our profeſſion by ſpiritual decays, as God the good huſbandman looks for a latter ſpring in us, even in old age, in the vigorous acting of grace and fruitful obedience; ſo without it we can neither have peace nor joy in our own ſouls. If a man therefore hath made a great appearance of religion in his former or younger days, and when he is growing into age becomes dead, cold, worldly, ſelfiſh; if we have no freſh ſprings of ſpiritual life in him, it is an evidence that he hath a barren heart, that was never really fruitful to God. I know that many ſtand in need of being excited by ſuch warning, unto a diligent conſideration of their ſtate and condition. It is true, that the latter

ſpring doth not bring forth the ſame fruit with the former. There is no more required in it, but that the ground evidence itſelf to be in good heart, and to put forth that which is proper unto the ſeaſon. It may be, ſuch graces as were active and vigorous in men at their firſt converſion unto God, as were carried in a ſtream of warm natural affections, may not ſo eminently abound in the latter ſpring of old age: but thoſe which are proper for the ſeaſon, as namely, ſpirituality, heavenly-mindedneſs, weanedneſs from the world, readineſs for the croſs, and death, are neceſſary, even in old age, to evidence that we have a living principle of grace, and to ſhew thereby that God is upright, he is our rock, and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him. What is further to be inſiſted on, ſhall be reduced unto theſe four heads.

Firſt, That the conſtitution of ſpiritual life, is ſuch as is meet to thrive, grow, and increaſe unto the end, and will do ſo, unleſs it be from the default of them in whom it is.

Secondly, That notwithſtanding this nature and conſtitution of ſpiritual life, yet believers are ſubject unto many decays, partly gradual, and partly by ſurpriſals in temptation, whereby the growth of it is obſtructed, unto the diſhonour of the goſpel, and the loſs of their own peace with joy.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew that ſuch at preſent is the condition of many profeſſors, namely, that they are viſibly fallen under ſpiritual decays, and do not evidence any intereſt in the bleſſed promiſe inſiſted on.

Fourthly, On the confirmation of theſe things, our inquiry will be, How ſuch perſons may be delivered from ſuch decays, and by what means they may obtain the grace here promiſed, of ſpiritual flouriſhing in old age, both in the ſtrengthening of the inward principle of life, and abounding in fruits of obedience, which are to the praiſe of God by Jeſus Chriſt: and then we ſhall make application unto this caſe, of that truth which is the ſubject of the preceding diſcourſe.

Firſt, The conſtitution of ſpiritual life is ſuch, as is meet to grow and increaſe unto the end. Hereby it doth diſtinguiſh itſelf from that faith which is temporary; for there is a temporary faith which will both flouriſh for a ſeaſon, and bring forth ſome fruit, but it is not in its nature and conſtitution to abide, to grow and increaſe, but rather to decay and wither. It is deſcribed by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Matth. xiii. 20, 21. *But he that received the ſeed into ſtony places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himſelf, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or perſecu-*

tion ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended. Either ſome great temptation extinguiſheth it, or it decays inſenſibly, until the mind wherein it was do manifeſt itſelf to be utterly barren. And therefore whoever is ſenſible of any ſpiritual decays, he is called unto a ſevere trial and examination of himſelf, as unto the nature of the principle of his profeſſion and obedience; for ſuch decays do rather argue a principle of temporary faith only, unto which they are proper and natural, than that whoſe nature it is to thrive and grow to the end, whereon thoſe that have it, ſhall, as it is in the promiſe, ſtill bring forth fruit, and without their own great guilt be always freed from ſuch decays.

That this ſpiritual life is in its nature and conſtitution ſuch as will abide, thrive and grow to the end, is three ways teſtified unto in the ſcripture.

1. In that it is compared unto things of the moſt infallible increaſe and progreſs: for beſides that its growth is frequently likened unto that of plants and trees well watered, and in a fruitful ſoil, which fail not to ſpring, unleſs it be from ſome external violence; it is likewiſe compared unto ſuch things as whoſe progreſs is abſolutely infallible, Prov. iv. 18. *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* The path of the juſt is his covenant-walk before God, as it is frequently called in the ſcripture, Pſal. cxix. 35. 105. Iſ. xxvi. 7. Pſal. xxiii. 3. Math. iii. 3. Heb. xii. 13. and it compriſeth the principle profeſſion, and fruits of it. This ſaith the wiſe man, is as the ſhining light, that is, the morning light: and wherein is it ſo? why, as that goeth on by degrees, and ſhineth more and more unto the high noon, (though it may be interrupted ſometimes by clouds and ſtorms); ſo is this path of the juſt, it goes on and increaſeth unto the high noon, the perfect day of glory. It is in its nature ſo to do, though it may ſometimes meet with obſtructions, as we ſhall ſee afterwards; and ſo doth the morning light alſo.

There is no viſible difference as unto light, between the light of the morning, and the light of the evening; yea, this latter ſometimes, from gleams of the ſetting ſun, ſeems to be more glorious than the other. But herein they differ; the firſt goes on gradually unto more light, until it comes to perfection; the other gradually gives place unto darkneſs, until it comes to be midnight. So is it as unto the light of the juſt and of the hypocrite, and ſo is it as unto their paths. At firſt ſetting out they may ſeem alike and equal; yea, convictions and ſpiritual gift acted with corrupt ends in ſome hypocrites, may for

a time give a greater luſtre of profeſſion, than the grace of others ſincerely converted unto God may attain unto. But herein they diſcover their different natures; the one increaſeth and goeth on conſtantly, though it may be ſometimes but faintly; the other decays, grows dim, gives place to darkneſs and crooked walking.

This then is the nature of the path of the juſt: and where it is otherwiſe with us in our walk before God, we can have no evidence that we are in that path, or that we have a living, growing principle of ſpiritual life in us. And it is fit that profeſſors of all ſorts ſhould be minded of theſe things; for we may ſee not a few of them under viſible decays, without any ſincere endeavours after a recovery, who yet pleaſe themſelves that the root of the matter is in them. It is ſo, if love of the world, conformity unto it, negligence in holy duties, and coldneſs in ſpiritual love be an evidence of ſuch decays. But let none deceive their own ſouls; wherever there is a ſaving principle of grace, it will be thriving and growing unto the end. And if it fall under obſtructions, and thereby into decays for a ſeaſon, it will give no reſt or quietneſs unto the ſoul wherein it is, but will labour continually for a recovery. Peace in a ſpiritually decaying condition, is a ſoul-ruining ſecurity; better be under terror on the account of ſurpriſal into ſome ſin, than be in peace under evident decays of ſpiritual life.

And by the way, this comparing of the path of the juſt unto the morning light, minds me of what I have ſeen more than once. That light hath ſometimes chearfully appeared unto the world, when after a little ſeaſon, by reaſon of clouds, tempeſts, and ſtorms, it hath given place again to darkneſs, like that of the night; but it hath not ſo been loſt and buried like the evening light; after a while it hath recovered itſelf unto a greater luſtre than before, manifeſting that it increaſed in itſelf, whilſt it was eclipſed as to us. So hath it been with not a few at their firſt converſion unto God; great darkneſs and trouble have by the efficacy of temptation, and injections of Satan, poſſeſſed their minds: but the grace which they have received being as the morning light, hath after a while diſentangled itſelf, and given evidence, that it was ſo far from being extinguiſhed, as that it grew and thrived under all thoſe clouds and darkneſs; for the light of the juſt doth in the iſſue always increaſe by temptations, as that of the hypocrite is conſtantly impaired by them.

Again, as it is as the morning light, than which nothing hath a more aſſured progreſs; ſo it is called by our Saviour

living water, John iv. 10. yea, a *well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life*, ver. 14. It is an indeficient ſpring, not a pool or pond, though never ſo large, which may be dried up. Many ſuch pools of light, gifts, and profeſſion, have we ſeen utterly dried up, when they have come into age, or been inſnared by the temptations of the world. And we may ſee others every day under dangerous decays; their countenances are changed, and they have loſt that oil which makes the face of a believer to ſhine, namely, the oil of love, meekneſs, ſelf-denial, and ſpirituality of converſe; and inſtead thereof there is ſpread upon them the fulſome ointment of pride, ſelf-love, earthly-mindedneſs, which increaſeth on them more and more. But where this principle of ſpiritual life is, it is as the morning light, as an indeficient ſpring that never fails, nor can do ſo, until it iſſue in eternal life: and ſundry other ways there are whereby the ſame truth is aſſerted in the ſcripture.

2. There are ſundry divine promiſes given unto believers, that ſo it ſhall be, or to ſecure them of ſuch ſupplies of grace as ſhall cauſe their ſpiritual life to grow, increaſe, and flouriſh unto the end, ſuch as that in the Pſalm which we have conſidered: for theſe promiſes are the means whereby this ſpiritual life is originally communicated unto us, and whereby it is preſerved in us; by them are we made partakers of this divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.; and through them is it continued in us. Now, promiſes of this nature, namely, that by the diſpenſation of the Spirit of Chriſt, and ſupplies of his grace, our ſpiritual life ſhall flouriſh, and be made fruitful to the end, I ſhall briefly call over one of them only at preſent, which is recorded, Iſ. xliv. 3, 4. *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine offspring: and they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water courſes.*

Although this promiſe may have reſpect unto the gracious dealing of God with the people of the Jews after their return from the captivity, yet hath it ſo only as it was typical of the redemption of the church by Jeſus Chriſt: but it belongs properly to the times of the goſpel, when the righteous were to flouriſh; and it is a promiſe of the new covenant, as is manifeſt, in that it is not only given unto believers, but is alſo extended unto their ſeed and offspring, which is an aſſured ſignature of new-covenant promiſes. And here is, (1.) A ſuppoſition of what we are in ourſelves, both before and after our converſion unto God, namely, as thirſty, dry, and barren ground. We have nothing in ourſelves, no radical moiſture to make us

flouriſhing and fruitful. And as it is before, ſo it is after converſion; *We are not ſufficient of ourſelves, our ſufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Being left to ourſelves, we ſhould utterly wither and periſh. But, (2.) Here is the bleſſed relief which God in this caſe hath provided; he will pour the ſanctifying water of his Spirit, and the bleſſing of his grace upon us. And this he will ſo do, as to cauſe us to ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes. There is nothing of a more eminent and almoſt viſible growth than willows by the water-courſes. Such ſhall be the ſpiritual growth of believers under the influences of theſe promiſes; that is, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing, and ſtill bring forth fruit. And other promiſes of the ſame nature there are many; but we muſt obſerve two things concerning them, that we may be ſatisfied in their accompliſhment. As,

(1.) The promiſes of the new covenant, as unto the firſt communication of grace unto the elect, are abſolute and unconditional; they are the executive conveyances of God's immutable purpoſes and decrees: and what ſhould be the condition of the communication of the firſt grace unto us? Nothing that is not grace can be ſo. If it be ſaid, that this alſo is of God in us, which is the condition of the communication of the firſt ſaving grace unto us, then I would know whether that be beſtowed on us without any condition? If it be, then that is the firſt grace, as being abſolutely free; if it be not, then what is the condition whereon it is beſtowed? concerning which the ſame inquiry muſt be made, and ſo for ever. But this is the glory of covenant-promiſes, that as unto the communication of the grace of converſion and ſanctification unto the elect, they are abſolutely free and unconditionate. But,

(2.) The promiſes which reſpect the growth, degrees, and meaſures of this grace in believers are not ſo. There are many duties required of us, that theſe promiſes may be accompliſhed towards us, and in us; yea, watchful diligence in univerſal goſpel-obedience is expected from us unto this end, 2 Pet. i. 4.---10. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes; that by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt. And beſides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge: and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity. For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But he that lacketh theſe*

things, is blind, and cannot ſee far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old ſins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election ſure: for if ye do theſe things, ye ſhall never fail. This is the ordinary method of the communication of all ſupplies of grace to make us ſpiritually flouriſh, and be fruitful, namely, that we be found in the diligent exerciſe of what we have received. God doth ſometimes deal otherwiſe in a way of ſovereignty, and ſurpriſeth men with healing grace in the midſt of their decays and backſlidings, Iſaiah lvii. 17, 18. *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth, and ſmote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have ſeen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him alſo, and reſtore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.* So hath many a poor ſoul been delivered from going down into the pit. The good Shepherd will go out of his way to ſave a wandering ſheep; but this is the ordinary method.

(3.) Notwithſtanding theſe bleſſed promiſes of growth, flouriſhing, and fruitfulneſs, if we are negligent in the due improvement of the grace which we have received, and the diſcharge of the duties required of us, we may fall into decays, and be kept in a low, unthrifty ſtate all our days. And this is the principal ground of the diſcrepancy between the glory and beauty of the church, as repreſented in the promiſes of the goſpel, and as exemplified in the lives and walking of profeſſors, they do not live up unto the condition of their accompliſhment in them; howbeit, in God's way and time they ſhall be all fulfilled. We have therefore innumerable bleſſed promiſes concerning the thriving, growing, and flouriſhing of the principle of ſpiritual life in us even in old age, and until death: but the grace promiſed unto this end, will not befal us whilſt we are aſleep in ſpiritual ſloth and ſecurity; fervent prayer, the exerciſe of all grace received, with watchfulneſs unto all holy duties, are required hereunto.

3. God hath ſecured the growth of this ſpiritual life, by the proviſion of food for it, whereby it may be ſtrengthened and increaſed, for life muſt be preſerved by food. And this in our caſe is the word of God, with all other ordinances of divine worſhip which depend thereon, 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. *As new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* Whatever the ſtate of this life be, whether in its beginning, its progreſs, its decays, there is ſuitable nouriſhment provided for it in the good word of God's grace. If men will neglect their daily food that is provided for them, it is no wonder if they be

weak and thriftleſs. And if believers are not earneſt in their deſires after this food, if they are not diligent in providing of it, attending unto it, much more if through corruptions and temptations they count it in the preaching of it light and common food, which they do not value, it is no wonder if they if they fall into ſpiritual decays; but God hath herein provided for our growth even unto old age.

And this is the *firſt* thing which was propoſed unto confirmation, namely, that the conſtitution and nature of ſpiritual life is ſuch, as to be indeficient, ſo as to thrive and grow even in old age, and unto the end.

The *ſecond* thing propoſed is, That notwithal this proviſion for the growth of ſpiritual life in us, believers, eſpecially in a long courſe of profeſſion, are ſubject to decays, ſuch as may caſt them into great perplexities, and endanger their eternal ruin.

And theſe ſpiritual decays are of two ſorts. (1.) Such as are gradual and univerſal, in the loſs of the vigour and life of grace, both in its principle, and in its exerciſe. (2.) Such as are occaſioned by ſurpriſal into ſin through the power of temptation; I mean, ſuch ſins as do waſte the ſpiritual powers of the ſoul, and deprive it of all ſolid peace.

As for temporary believers, give them but time enough in this world, eſpecially if it be accompanied with outward proſperity, or perſecution; and for the moſt part their decays of one ſort or another will make a diſcovery of their hypocriſy. Though they retain a form of godlineſs, they deny the power of it, Prov. i. 31. *Therefore ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.* And if they do not openly relinquiſh all duties of religion, yet they will grow ſo lifeleſs and ſavourleſs in them, as ſhall evidence their condition; for ſo it is with them who are lukewarm, who are neither hot nor cold, who have a name to live, but are dead.

And herein lieth a ſignal difference in this matter, between ſincere believers, and thoſe who believe only for a time; for thoſe of the latter ſort do either not perceive their ſickneſs and decays, their minds being taken up and poſſeſſed with other things; or if they do find that it is not with them as it hath been formerly, they are not much concerned, and on any occaſional new conviction they cry, *Yet a little* more *ſlumber, a little* more *ſleep, a little* more *folding of the hands to ſleep.* But when the other do find any thing of this nature, it makes them reſtleſs for a recovery. And although through the many ſnares, temptations, and deceits of ſin, or through their igno-

rance of the right way for their healing, they do not many of them obtain a ſpeedy recovery, yet none of them do approve themſelves in ſuch a condition, or turn unto any undue reliefs.

Now that believers are ſubject to decays in both the ways mentioned, we have full teſtimony in ſcripture: for as unto that general gradual decay, in the loſs of our firſt faith, love and works, in the weakning of the internal principle of ſpiritual life, with the loſs thereon of delight, joy and conſolation, and the abatement of the fruits of obedience, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth expreſsly charge one five of the ſeven churches of Aſia, Rev. ii. iii. And in ſome of them, as Sardis and Laodicea, thoſe decays had proceeded unto ſuch a degree, as that they were in danger of utter rejection. And hereunto anſwers the experience of all churches, and all believers in the world. Thoſe who are otherwiſe minded, are dead in ſin, and have got pretences to countenance themſelves in their miſerable condition. So is it with the church of Rome; and I wiſh others did not in ſome meaſure follow them therein.

As unto thoſe of the ſecond ſort, whereinto men are caſt by ſurpriſals and temptations, producing great ſpiritual diſtreſs and anguiſh of ſoul, under a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, we have an inſtance in David, as he gives an account of himſelf, Pſalm xxxviii. ver. 2. to the 10. *O Lord, thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger: neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds ſtink, and are corrupt; becauſe of my fooliſhneſs*, &c.

It is certain, that here is a deſcription of a very woful ſtate and condition: and the pſalmiſt knowing that he was called of God to be a teacher and inſtructer of the church in all ages, records his own experience unto that end Hence the title of it is, *A pſalm to bring to remembrance:* ſome judge that David had reſpect unto ſome great and ſore diſeaſe that he was then viſited withal. But if it were ſo, it was only an occaſion of his complaint; the cauſe of it was ſin alone. And four things he doth repreſent. (1.) That he had departed from God, and fallen into provoking ſins, which had produced great diſtreſſes in his mind, ver. 3, 4. (2.) That he had foolliſhly continued in that ſtate, not making timely application to grace and mercy for healing, whereby it was grown deplorable, ver. 5. And this folly is that alone which makes ſuch a condition dangerous; namely, when men on their ſurpriſals in ſin, do not ſpeedily apply themſelves unto healing remedies (3.) That he

had herein a continual ſenſe of the diſpleaſure of God by reaſon of ſin, ver. 2, 3, 4. (4.) That he was altogether reſtleſs in this ſtate, mourning, groaning, labouring continually for deliverance. This is a clearer delineation of the condition of believers, when either by the greatneſs of any ſin, or by a long continuance in an evil and a careleſs frame, they are caſt under a ſenſe of divine diſpleaſure. This opens their minds and their hearts, declaring how all things are within, which they cannot deny. It is not ſo with many in the ſame meaſures and degrees as it was with David, whoſe falls were very great, but the ſubſtance of it is found in them all. And herein the heart knoweth its own bitterneſs; a ſtranger intermeddleth not with it: none knows the groaning and labouring of a ſoul convinced of ſuch ſpiritual decays, but he alone in whom they are. Hereon is it caſt down to the earth, going mourning all the day long, though others know nothing of its ſorrows. But it is of a far more ſad conſideration, to ſee men manifeſting their inward decays by their outward fruits, and yet are little or not at all concerned therein. The former are in ways of recovery, theſe in the paths that go down to the chambers of death.

I ſuppoſe, therefore, I may take it for granted, that there are few profeſſors of religion, who have had any long continuance in the ways of it, having withal been expoſed unto the temptations of life, and much exerciſed with the occaſions of it; but that they have been aſleep in their days, as the ſpouſe complains of herſelf, Cant. v. 2.; that is, they have been overtaken with decays of one ſort or another, either with reſpect unto ſpiritual or moral duties, in their relation unto churches or families; in their judgments, or their affections; in their inward frames or outward actions, they have been overtaken with the effects of ſloth, negligence, or the want of a continual watch in the life of faith: I wiſh it were otherwiſe.

I principally herein intend thoſe gradual declenſions in the life and power of grace, which men in a long courſe of profeſſion are ſubject unto. And theſe for the moſt part proceed from formality in holy duties, under the conſtant outward performance of them; vehement engagements in the affairs of life, an overvaluation of ſinful enjoyments, growth in carnal wiſdom, neglect of daily mortification of ſuch ſins as men are naturally diſpoſed unto, with a ſecret influence from the prevalent temptation of the days wherein we live, which things are not now to be ſpoken unto.

Thirdly, But I come to that which was propoſed in the *third* place, namely, to ſhew that this at preſent is the ſtate of many

profeſſors of religion, that they are fallen under thoſe ſpiritual decays, and do not enjoy the effects of the promiſes concerning flouriſhing and fruitfulneſs, which we have inſiſted on. To faſten a conviction on them, or ſome of them at leaſt, that it is indeed ſo with them, is my preſent deſign; and this ought to be done with ſome diligence. The glory of Chriſt, the honour of the goſpel, and the danger of the ſouls of men do call for it. This is the ſecret root of all our evil which will not be removed unleſs it be digged up. Who ſees not, who complains not of the loſs of, or decays in the power of religion, in the days wherein we live? but few there are, who either know or apply themſelves, or direct others unto the proper remedy of this evil. Beſides, it is almoſt as difficult to convince men of their ſpiritual decays, as it is to recover them from them; but without this, healing is impoſſible. If men know not their ſickneſs, they will not ſeek for a cure. Some when they ſee their ſickneſs, and their wound, will apply themſelves unto wrong uſeleſs remedies, like them in the prophet, Hoſ. v. 13. *When Ephraim ſaw his ſickneſs, and Judah ſaw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.* But none will make uſe of any cure who ſee no diſeaſe at all. Wherefore, to faſten a conviction hereof on the minds of ſome, we may make uſe of the enſuing inquiries and obſervations.

1. Have you in the way of your profeſſion had any experience of theſe ſpiritual decays? I doubt not but there are ſome who have been preſerved green and flouriſhing, from their firſt converſion unto God, who never fell under the power of ſloth, neglect, or temptation, at leaſt not for any remarkable ſeaſon, but they are but few. It was not ſo ſcarce with any of theſe believers under the Old Teſtament, whoſe lives and walkings are recorded for our inſtruction; and they muſt be ſuch as lived in an exact and diligent courſe of mortification. And ſome there are who have obtained relief and deliverance from under their decays, whoſe backſlidings have been healed, and their diſeaſes cured. So it was with David, as he divinely expreſſeth it, Pſal. ciii. 1,—5. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul: and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diſeaſes. Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction: who crowneth thee with loving kindneſs and tender mercies Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things; ſo that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.* So doth he celebrate his deliverance from that eſtate, whereof he complains, Pſal. xxxviii. which we

mentioned before. And there is no grace or mercy that doth more affect the hearts of believers, that gives them a greater tranſport of joy and thankfulneſs, than this of deliverance from backſlidings. It is a bringing of the ſoul out of priſon, which enlargeth it unto praiſe, Pſal. cxlii. 7. Of this ſort I doubt not but that there are many; for God hath given great warnings of the danger of a ſpiritual decaying ſtate; and he hath made great promiſes of recovery from it, and multitudes in the church are daily exerciſed herein: but I ſpeak in general unto all. Have you any experience of ſuch ſpiritual decays, either in the frame of your ſpirits, or in the manner of your walking before God, or at leaſt that you are prone unto them, if not mightily preſerved by the power of grace in your own utmoſt diligence? If you have not ſo, then I fear it is from one of theſe two cauſes.

(1.) That indeed you have never had any flouriſhing ſpiritual ſtate in your ſouls. He that hath been always weak and ſickly, doth not know what it is to want a ſtate of health and ſtrength, becauſe he never had experience of it; much leſs doth he that is dead, know what it is to want life. But he that from an exquiſite temper of health, falls into languiſhing diſtempers, knows diſtinctly, both how it was, and how it is with him. And the frame of the minds of many profeſſors of religion, with the manner of their walking, is ſuch, as that if they are not ſenſible of ſpiritual decays, it is evident that they never had any good ſpiritual health; and it is to no purpoſe to treat with ſuch perſons about a recovery. There are amongſt thoſe who make an outward profeſſion of true religion, many that live in all ſorts of ſins. If you ſhould deal with them about backſlidings, decays, and a recovery, you will ſeem unto them, as Lot did to his ſons-in-law, when he told them of the deſtruction of Sodom, as one that mocked, or made ſport with them, Gen. xix. 14. or you will be mocked by them for your pains; they have been always ſuch as they are, it was never otherwiſe with them, and it is a ridiculous thing to ſpeak to them of a recovery. We muſt be able in this caſe to ſay to men, *Remember whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your firſt works*, Rev. ii. 5. They muſt have had an experience of a better ſtate, or they will not endeavour a recovery from that wherein they are. Such therefore as ſee neither evil nor danger in their preſent condition, but ſuppoſe all is well enough with them, becauſe it is as good as ever it was, will not eaſily be brought under this conviction; but they have that which is of no leſs importance for them to inquire into, namely, whe-

ther they have had any thing of the truth of grace or no? Or,

(2.) If you have not this experience, it is to be feared that you are aſleep in ſecurity, which is hardly diſtinguiſhable from death in ſin. The church of Laodicea was ſenſibly decayed, and gone off from its primitive faith and obedience, yet ſhe was ſo ſecure in her condition, knew ſo little of it, that ſhe judged herſelf on the contrary to be in a thriving flouriſhing ſtate. She thought herſelf increaſed in all church riches and goods, that is, gifts and graces, while ſhe was *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked,* Rev. iii. 17. in ſuch a ſtate as wherein it is queſtionable, whether ſhe had any thing of the life and power of grace to be found in her or no. And ſo is it with many churches at this day, eſpecially that which boaſts itſelf to be without error, or blame: and it is ſtrange that a church ſhould ſuppoſe that it flouriſheth in grace and gifts, when it hath nothing but a noiſe of words in their ſtead.

So God teſtified concerning Ephraim, that *grey hairs were ſprinkled on him, yet he knew it not,* Hoſ. viii. 9.; he was in a declining, dying condition, but did not underſtand it. Hence it is added, *They did not return to the Lord their God, nor ſeek him for all this,* ver. 10. If men will not learn, and own their ſpiritual decays, there is no hopes of prevailing with them to return unto the Lord; *The whole have no need of a phyſician, but the ſick;* Chriſt *came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance;* ſuch perſons are under the power of a ſtupid ſecurity, from whence it will be very hard to rouſe them up. Hence it is that we have ſo little ſucceſs for the moſt part, in calling perſons to look after a revival and recovery of their decays; they acknowledge no ſuch thing in themſelves, ſuch calls may belong unto others; yea, if any word ſeem to come near them unto their diſquietment, they are apt to think it was ſpoken out of ſpite and ill-will towards them; they approve of themſelves in their preſent condition. Hence is the complaint of Chriſt in the miniſtry of the word: *I have called, and ye have refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded; ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and you would none of my reproof,* Prov. i. 24, 25. Hence let this truth be preſſed a thouſand times, it is not one of a thouſand who will think himſelf ſo concerned, as to apply himſelf unto a relief. A ſpirit of ſlumber ſeems to be poured on many.

2. To improve this conviction, I would aſk of ſome, whether they have been able to maintain ſpiritual peace and joy in their ſouls? I take it for granted, that ordinarily they are inſeparable adjuncts of the life of faith, in an humble fruitful walk

before God. The ſcripture teſtifieth that they are ſo, and no experience lies againſt it in ordinary caſes. And I ſuppoſe that thoſe unto whom I ſpeak, do in ſome meaſure know what they are, and do not delude themſelves with fancies and imaginations; they have ſubſtance in them, however by ſome derided, and to ſome unknown. Have this peace and joy been maintained and borne ſway in your minds? have they under all trials and ſurpriſals been quickly compoſed by them? or are you not rather on all occaſions uneaſy and perplexed? This is certain, that a decaying ſpiritual ſtate, and ſolid ſpiritual peace, are inconſiſtent; and if ever you had ſuch peace, you may by the loſs of it, know into what ſtate you are come.

3. Not to inquire further into things internal and hidden, wherein men may juſtify themſelves if they pleaſe, there are too many open viſible evidences of theſe decays among profeſſors of religion; they have not kept them from the eyes of the church, nor yet from the world: Do pride, ſelfiſhneſs, worldlineſs, levity of attire, and vanity of life, with corrupt unſavoury communication, abound among many? The world was never in a worſe poſture for conformity, than it is at this day, wherein all fleſh hath corrupted its ways; and yet as unto things of outward appearance, how little diſtinction is left between it, and thoſe who would be eſteemed more ſtrict profeſſors of religion! Was this the way and manner of the ſaints of old, of thoſe that went before us in the ſame profeſſion? was it ſo with ourſelves in the time of our firſt eſpouſals, when we went after God in the wilderneſs, in a land that was not ſown, as Jer. ii. 2.? Some underſtand what I ſay: if we have not ſome of us had better days, we never had good days in our lives; if we have had them, why do we not ſtir up ourſelves to look after a recovery?

4. May not God ſay of many of us, what he ſaid of his people of old, *Thou haſt been weary of me, O Iſrael?* Iſ. xliii. 22. Have we not been weary of God, until we have abundant cauſe to be weary of ourſelves? The moſt I preſume will be ready with them in Malachi, to ſay, *How or wherein have we been weary of God?* do we not abide, yea, abound in the duties of his ſervice? what can be more required of us? wherein are we to blame? This were ſomething indeed, but it is often ſo, that men are weary of God, when they even weary God with their duties and ſervices, Iſ. i. 13, 14. *Bring no more vain oblations, incenſe is an abomination unto me, the new moons and ſabbaths, the calling of aſſemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the ſolemn meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feaſts my ſoul hateth: they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them.* God ſays in his

word, he is weary; they ſay ſay in their hearts, they are weary, Mal. i. 13. *Behold what a wearineſs is it! and ye have ſnuffed at it, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* But I anſwer,

1*ſt*, Many cannot with any modeſty make uſe of this pretence. Their ſloth, indifference, and negligence in the obſervance of the duties of divine worſhip, both in private and public, is notorious. In particular, is not the duty of family-prayer neglected by many, at leaſt as to its conſtancy and fervency? And although it be grounded in the light of nature, confirmed by the general rules of the ſcripture, requiſite unto the dedication of a family unto God, ſtrengthened by the conſtant example of all the ſaints of old, and neceſſary in the experience of all that walk with God; yet do not many begin to ſeek out pleas and arguings to juſtify their omiſſion hereof? Are not all things filled with the fruits of the negligence of ſuch profeſſors, in the inſtruction of their children and ſervants? and hath not God given ſevere rebukes unto many of us in their fearful miſcarriages? And as unto the public worſhip of God, I wiſh that ſloth and indifferency did not appear upon too many, under various pretences. But,

2*dly*, This is not that which I do intend; men may be weary of God, whilſt they abide in the obſervance of a multitude of outward duties.

(1.) They may be ſo, with reſpect unto that ſpirituality and intention of mind unto the exerciſe of all grace, which are required unto ſuch duties. Theſe are the life, the ſoul, the animating principle of them, without which their outward performance is but a dead carcaſe. Men may draw nigh to God with their lips, when their hearts are far from him. This is that which becomes God in his worſhip, and is uſeful to our own ſouls; for *God is a Spirit, and he will be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth*; which he is not, but in the exerciſe of the graces of his Spirit in the worſhippers; *for bodily exerciſe profiteth little; but godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, 1 Tim. iv. 8.

To keep up the mind unto this frame, to ſtir up all grace unto a conſtant vigorous exerciſe in all holy duties, is a matter whereunto great ſpiritual diligence and watchfulneſs is required: *Watch unto prayer.* A thouſand pretences riſe againſt it; all the arts of ſloth, formality, wearineſs of the fleſh, and the buſineſs of life, do contend to fruſtrate the deſign of it. And the ſuitableneſs of reſting in the work done unto the principles of a natural conſcience, gives efficacy to them all: and when come to ſatisfy themſelves herein, it may be it were better that for a time ſuch duties were wholly omitted; for in that caſe conſcience itſelf will urgently call on men not har-

dened in ſin, to a conſideration of their condition; wherefore much ſpiritual labour and diligence is required in this matter. The outward performance of religious duties, be they never ſo many, or however ſtrictly enjoined, as the daily and nightly canonical hours amongſt the popiſh devotioniſts, is an eaſy taſk, much inferior unto the conſtant labour which ſome men uſe in their trades and callings. And in them, in the performance of them either public, or in their families, men may be weary of God: and according as they are remiſs in the conſtant keeping up of ſpirituality, and exerciſe of grace in ſacred duties, ſo is the degree of their wearineſs. And there is almoſt nothing whereby men may take a ſafer meaſure of their decays, or growth, than by the uſual frame of their minds in theſe duties. If they do conſtantly in them *ſtir up themſelves to take hold of God*, as Iſa. lxiv. 7. it is an evidence of a good temper of ſpiritual health in the ſoul. But this will not be done without the utmoſt watchfulneſs and care againſt impreſſions from the fleſh and other temptations. But ſloth and formality herein, is a ſign of a thriftleſs ſtate in the inner man: and all inventions of ſuch formality are diſſerviceable unto the intereſt of grace.

(2.) So is it with them alſo, who attending unto the outward duties of religion, do yet indulge themſelves in any known ſin; for there is nothing of God in thoſe duties, which tend not unto the mortification of all ſin; and men may keep up a form of godlineſs, to countenance themſelves in the neglect of its power. And in particular, where any known ſin is indulged unto, where the mortification of it is not duly endeavoured, where our religious duties are not uſed, applied and directed unto that end, there is a wearineſs of whatever is of God in them, nor hath the ſoul any real intercourſe or communion with God by them.

5. If we ſhould make a particular inquiry into the ſtate of our ſouls, with reſpect unto thoſe graces which are moſt uſeful, and tend moſt to the glory of God, it is to be feared, that the decays of many would be made very evident; ſuch are zeal, humility, contriteneſs of heart, ſpiritual-mindedneſs, vigour of ſoul, and delight in the ways of God, love, charity, ſelf-denial, and the like. Are we fat and flouriſhing in theſe things even in old age? are they in us, and do abound, as the apoſtle ſpeaks? 2 Pet. i. 8. *For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Do we bring forth the fruit of them ſo as to ſhow the faithfulneſs of God in his ſupply of grace? I ſhall not make a

particular inquiry into them, but only give two general rules whereby we may try ourſelves with reſpect unto them all.

1ſt, The loſs of a ſpiritual appetite unto the food of our ſouls, is an evidence of a decay in all theſe graces. Spiritual appetite conſiſts in earneſt deſires, and a ſavoury reliſh: ſo it is deſcribed by the apoſtle, 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. *As new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* There is required unto this ſpiritual appetite an earneſt deſire of the word, grounded on an experience of the grace of God in it unto this end, that we may grow and thrive ſpiritually thereby. And this appetite will give us as juſt a meaſure of the ſtate of grace in us, as a natural appetite unto wholeſome food, with due digeſtion thereon, doth give of a good ſtate of health in the body. This therefore we are to inquire into. Doth it abide in us as formerly? We hear the word preached as much as ever; but do we do it with the ſame deſire and ſpiritual reliſh as before? Some hear to ſatisfy their conviction, ſome to pleaſe their fancies, and ſome to judge of the perſons by whom it is diſpenſed. It is but in few that the neceſſary preparation for the due receiving of it are found. When men grow in age, they loſe much of their natural appetite unto food; they muſt eat ſtill for the maintenance of life, but they do it not with that deſire after it, and that guſt in it as in the days of youth and health. Hence they are apt to think, that the meat which they had formerly was more ſavoury than what is now provided for them; though what they now enjoy is much to be preferred before what they then had; the change is in themſelves. So we may find not a few profeſſors, who are ready to think and ſay, that the preaching which they had in former days, and the religious exerciſes which they were engaged in, were far to be preferred above what they now enjoy. But the change is in themſelves, they have loſt their ſpiritual appetite, or their hunger and thirſt after the food of their ſouls. *The full ſoul loatheth an honey-comb; but to the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet*, Prov. xxvii. 7. Men being grown full of themſelves, and of a good conceit of their own abilities, have loſt their ſpiritual appetite unto the word of God; and this makes the word loſe its power and efficacy towards them. That word which the pſalmiſt ſays is *ſweeter than honey, or honey-comb*, Pſal. xix. 10. hath little or no taſte or reliſh in it unto them. If they were hungry, they would find a ſweetneſs in the bittereſt of its reproofs, beyond what they can now find in the ſweeteſt of its promiſes. They come to hear the word with ſick deſires, and low expectations, as if they were invited to eat after a feaſt, being ſelf-

full before. But this loſs of a ſpiritual appetite, is an evidence of the decay of all other graces whatever.

2*dly*, A neglect of making religion our principal buſineſs, is another evidence of the decay of all ſorts of grace in us: for where grace is in its proper exerciſe, it will ſubordinate all things unto religion, and the ends of it, as David twenty times declares in the cxixth Pſalm. All things, all occaſions of life ſhall be poſtponed thereunto: the love and valuation of it will bear ſway in our minds, our thoughts and affections, and the practice of it ſhall give rule unto all other concernments. But is it ſo with many amongſt us? It is well if religion be *one thing*, it is far enough from being *the one thing*; every other thing is preferred before it, and it can hardly crowd in to poſſeſs any place in their minds. To ſee men continually plodding in the affairs of the world, regulating all their actings by their concernment in them, diverting only at ſome ſeaſons, as it were, out of their way unto duties of religion, it is vain to ſay, that they may make religion their buſineſs: but there is ſcarce a more certain evidence of a frame of mind ſpiritually decaying in all ſorts of graces, if ever any of them were in it in ſincerity and power, than this one, that men do not make religion their chiefeſt buſineſs: and a little ſelf-examination will help men to judge what it is that they make ſo to be.

Laſtly, I might alſo inſtance in the uſeleſſneſs of men in their profeſſion; in want of love unto all ſaints, barrenneſs in good works, unreadineſs and unwillingneſs to comply in any extraordinary manner with the calls of God unto repentance and reformation; in love of the world, and pride of life, with paſſions ſuited unto ſuch principles, predominant in them; for they are all undeniable evidences, that thoſe with whom they are found, had never any true grace at all, or that they are fallen under woful decays. But what hath been ſpoken may be ſufficient unto our preſent purpoſe.

This is the *third* thing that was propoſed, namely, an endeavour to leave convictions on the minds of ſome concerning their ſpiritual decays, and the neceſſity of ſeeking after a revival by the means that ſhall be inſiſted on. And I intend it principally for thoſe of us, who under a long profeſſion, are now come unto age, and ſhall not have much time for duty continued unto us. And the truth is, I meet with none, who are Chriſtians of any conſiderable experience, and are ſpiritually minded, but they are ſenſible of the danger of ſuch decays in this hour of temptation, and how difficult it is in the uſe of all means to keep up a vigorous active frame of mind, in faith, love, holineſs, and fruitfulneſs. And for thoſe who are not

concerned herein, I confeſs I know not what to make of them, or their religion.

Fourthly, I proceed unto that which was propoſed in the *fourth* or *laſt* place; namely, The way and means whereby believers may be delivered from theſe decays, and come to thrive and flouriſh in the inward principle, and outward fruits of ſpiritual life, which will bring us back unto the conſideration of that truth, which we may ſeem to have diverted from. And to this end, the things enſuing are propoſed unto conſideration.

1. The ſtate of ſpiritual decays is recoverable. No man that is fallen under it hath any reaſon to ſay there is no hope, provided he take the right way for his recovery. If every ſtep that is loſt in the way to heaven ſhould be irrecoverable, woe would be unto us; we ſhould all aſſuredly periſh. If there were no reparation of our breaches, no healing of our decays, no ſalvation but for them who are always progreſſive in grace; if God *ſhould mark all that is done amiſs*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* Nay, if we had not recoveries every day, we ſhould go off with a perpetual backſliding. But then, as was ſaid, it is required that the right means of it may be uſed, and not that which is deſtructive of what is deſigned, whereof I ſhall give an inſtance. When trees grow old, or are decaying, it is uſual to dig about them, and manure them, which may cauſe them to flouriſh again, and abound in fruit: but inſtead hereof, if you remove them out of their ſoil, to plant them in another, which may promiſe much advantage, they will aſſuredly wither and die. So it is with profeſſors, and hath been with many; finding themſelves under manifold decays, and little or nothing of the life and power of religion left in them, they have grown weary of their ſtation, and have changed their ſoil, or turning from one way in religion to another, as ſome have turned Papiſts, ſome Quakers, and the like, apprehending that fault to be in the religion which the profeſſed, which was indeed only in themſelves. You cannot give an inſtance of any one who did not viſibly wither and die therein; but had they uſed the proper means for their healing and recovery, they might have lived and brought forth fruit.

2. A ſtrict attendance unto the ſeverities of mortification, with all the duties that lead thereunto, is required unto this end; ſo alſo is the utmoſt diligence in all duties of obedience. Theſe things naturally offer themſelves, as the firſt relief in this caſe, and they ought not to be omitted. But if I ſhould inſiſt upon them, they would branch themſelves into ſuch a multitude of particular directions, as it is inconſiſtent with my deſign here to handle. Beſides, the way which I intend to

propoſe is of another nature, though conſiſtent with all the duties included in this propoſal; yea, ſuch as without which not one of them can be performed in a due manner. Wherefore, as unto theſe things, I ſhall only aſſert their neceſſity, with a double limitation.

1*ſt*, That no duties of mortification be preſcribed unto this end, as a means of recovery from ſpiritual decays, but what for matter and manner are of divine inſtitution and command. All others are laid under a ſevere interdict, under what pretence ſoever they may be uſed; *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* Want hereof, is that whereby a pretended deſign to advance religion in the Papacy, hath ruined it. They have under the name and pretence of the means of mortification, or the duties of it, invented and enjoined, like the Phariſees, a number of works, ways, duties, ſo called, which God never appointed, nor approved, nor will accept, nor ſhall they ever do good unto the ſouls of men. Such are their confeſſions, diſciplines, pilgrimages, faſtings, abſtinence, framed prayers to be repeated in ſtated canonical hours, in ſuch a length and number. In the bodily labour of theſe things, they exerciſe themſelves to no ſpiritual advantage.

But it is natural to all men to divert to ſuch reliefs in this caſe. Thoſe who are thoroughly convinced of ſpiritual decays, are therewithal preſſed with a ſenſe of the guilt of ſin; for it is ſin which hath brought them into that condition. Hereon in the firſt place, they ſet their contrivance at work, how they may atone divine diſpleaſure, and obtain acceptance with God: and if they are not under the actual conduct of evangelical light, two things immediately offer themſelves unto them. *Firſt*, Some extraordinary courſe in duties, which God hath not commanded. This is the way which they betake themſelves unto in the Papacy, and which guilt in the darkneſs of corrupted nature vehemently calls for. *Secondly*, An extraordinary multiplication of ſuch duties, as for the ſubſtance of them are required of us. An inſtance in both kinds we have, Micah vi. 6, 7. *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow myſelf before the high God? ſhall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands of rivers of oil? ſhall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?* And by this means they hope for a reſtitution into their former condition. And whereas ſpiritual decays are of two ſorts; *firſt*, from the power and effect of convictions only, which are multiplied among temporary believers; and, *ſecondly*, from degrees in the power and effects of ſaving grace: Thoſe whoſe

decays are of the firſt ſort, are never to be diverted from attempting their relief by ſuch means: and when they find them fail, for the moſt part they ceaſe contending, and abandon themſelves to the power of their luſts; for they have no evangelical light to guide them in another courſe.

Unto them who are of the ſecond ſort, is this direction given, in an endeavour for a recovery from backſliding, and thriving in grace, by a redoubling attendance unto the duties of mortification, and new obedience. Let care be taken, that as unto the matter of them they be of divine appointment, and as to the manner of their performance, that it be regulated by the rules of the ſcripture. Such are conſtant reading and hearing of the word, prayer with fervency therein, a diligent watch againſt all temptations and occaſions of ſin; eſpecially an endeavour by an holy earneſtneſs, and vehement rebukes, of the entrance of any other frame, to keep the mind ſpiritual and heavenly in its thoughts and affections.

2*dly*, Let them take heed, that they attempt not theſe things in their own ſtrength. When men have ſtrong convictions, that ſuch and ſuch things are their own duty, they are apt to act as if they were to be done in their own ſtrength. They muſt do them, they will do them, that is, as unto the outward work, and therefore they think they can do them, that is, in a due manner. The Holy Ghoſt hath for ever rejected this confidence, none ſhall proſper in it, 2 Cor. iii. 5. *Not that we are ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves: but our ſufficiency is of God.* chap. ix. 8. *And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all ſufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.* But hereby many deceive themſelves, labouring in the fire, while all they do doth immediately periſh; they have been negligent and careleſs, whereby things are come to an ill poſture with them, and that peace which they had is impaired; but now they will pray, and read, and faſt, and be liberal to the poor, and now an abſtinence from ſin. All theſe things they ſuppoſe they can do of themſelves, becauſe they can and ought to perform the outward works wherein, the duties intended do conſiſt. Hereby Chriſt is left out of the whole deſign, who when all is done, is the Lord that healeth us, Exod. xv. 26. And there is another evil herein; for whatever men do in their own natural abilities, there is a ſecret reſerve of ſome kind of merit in it. Thoſe who plead for theſe things, do aver there can be no merit in any thing, but what proceeds from our own free-will; and what is ſo done, hath ſome kind of merit inſeparably accompanying of it: and this is enough to render all endeavours

of this kind not only uſeleſs and fruitleſs, but utterly rejected. Faith muſt engage the aſſiſtance of Chriſt and his grace in and unto theſe duties; or however they may be multiplied, they will not be effectual unto our healing and recovery. Theſe things are to be uſed according as we receive ſupplies of grace from above, in ſubordination unto that work of faith that ſhall be declared. Wherefore,

3. The work of recovering backſliders or believers from under their ſpiritual decays, is an act of ſovereign grace, wrought in us by virtue of divine promiſes; out of this eater cometh meat. Becauſe believers are liable to ſuch declenſions, backſlidings, and decays, God hath provided and given unto us great and precious promiſes of a recovery, if we duly apply ourſelves unto the means of it. One of the places only wherein they are recorded, I ſhall here call over and explain, Hoſ. xiv. 1.—8. *O Iſrael, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly: ſo will we render the calves of our lips,* &c. *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Iſrael: he ſhall grow as the lily, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the olive-tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall return, they ſhall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the ſcent thereof ſhall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim ſhall ſay, What have I to do any more with idols? I have hard him, and obſerved him, I am like a green fir-tree, from me is thy fruit found.*

The whole matter treated of in general, both as unto the diſeaſe and remedy, is fully ſtated in this paſſage of ſcripture; and that in the experience of the church, and God's dealing with them: we may therefore receive may plain directions from it, and a ſafe guidance in our progreſs, which we ſhall endeavour to take in the enſuing obſervations.

1. This application of God unto Iſrael, *(O Iſrael, return)*, was made when the generality of the people were wicked and devoted unto utter deſtruction. So it is declared in the laſt words of the foregoing chapter, and their deſolation fell out not long after accordingly. Wherefore, no ſeaſon, nor circumſtances of things ſhall obſtruct ſovereign grace, when God will exerciſe it towards his church; it ſhall work in the midſt of deſolating judgments.

2. In ſuch a time the true Iſrael of God, the elect themſelves, are apt to be overtaken with the ſins of the whole, and ſo to backſlide from God, and ſo to fall into ſpiritual decays. So

Iſrael had now done, though ſhe had not abſolutely broken covenant with God; he was yet unto her *the Lord thy God*, yet ſhe had fallen by her iniquity. Times of public apoſtaſy are often accompanied with partial defects in the beſt; *Becauſe iniquity aboundeth, the love of many ſhall wax old*, Matth. xxiv. 12.

3. When God deſigns to heal the backſliding of his people by ſovereign grace, he gives them effectual calls unto repentance, and the uſe of means for their healing: ſo he doth here by his prophet, *O Iſrael, return, take with you words.* And if I could ſee that God did ſtir up his faithful miniſters to apply themſelves in a peculiar manner unto this work of preſſing vehemently all their congregations with their duty herein, and let them know, that there is no other way to prevent their ruin, but by returning unto the Lord, according to the ways of it here preſcribed; I ſhould not doubt but that the time of healing were at hand.

4. The means preſcribed unto this end, that our backſlidings may be healed, in a way ſuited unto the glory of God, is renewed repentance. And this acts itſelf,

1*ſt*, In fervent prayer; *Take with you words, and ſay*; conſider the greatneſs and importance of the work before you, and weigh well what you do in your dealing with God. The matter of this prayer is twofold: (1.) The pardon of all iniquity; that is, the taking of it away: and no ſin is omitted, all being now become equally burdenſome; *take away all iniquity.* When the ſouls of ſinners are in good earneſt in their return unto God, they will leave out the conſideration of no one ſin whatever. Nor are we meet for healing, nor ſhall we apply ourſelves unto it in a due manner, without ſome previous ſenſe of the love of God in the pardon of our ſin. (2.) Gracious acceptation; *receive us graciouſly.* The words in the original are only, *receive good*; but both the words being uſed variouſly, the ſenſe eminently included in them, is well expreſſed by *receive us graciouſly.* After we have caſt ourſelves under tokens of thy diſpleaſure, now let us know that we are freely accepted with thee. And this alſo lies in the deſires of them who deſign to obtain an healing of their backſlidings; for under them they are ſenſible that they are obnoxious unto God's diſpleaſure.

2*dly*, Affectionate confeſſions of the ſin, wherein their backſlidings did conſiſt, or which were the occaſions of them. *Aſſhur ſhall not ſave us*, &c. *we will ſay no more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods.* Fleſhly confidence, and falſe worſhip, were the two great ſins that had now ruined the body of the people: theſe believers themſelves had an acceſſion unto them more or leſs, as now they have unto the prevailing ſins, of the days

wherein we live, by conformity unto the world. Of theſe ſins God expecteth a full and free confeſſion in order unto our healing.

3*dly*, A renewed covenant-engagement to renounce all other hopes and expectation, and to betake themſelves with their whole truſt and confidence unto him; whereof they expreſs, *firſt*, the cauſe, which was his mere grace and mercy; *for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy:* and *ſecondly*, the effect of it, which is praiſe and thankſgiving; *ſo will we render the calves of our lips.* And ſome things we may hence farther obſerve as unto the caſe under conſideration. As,

(1.) Although God will repair our ſpiritual decays, and heal our backſlidings freely, yet he will do it ſo, or in ſuch a way, as wherein he may communicate grace unto us, to the praiſe of his own glory. Therefore are theſe duties preſcribed unto us in order thereunto; for although they are not the procuring cauſe of the love and grace from whence alone we are healed, yet are they required in the method of the diſpenſation of grace, to precede the effect of them. Nor have we any where a more illuſtrious inſtance and teſtimony of the conſiſtency and harmony which is between ſovereign grace, and the diligent diſcharge of our duty, than we have in this place: for as God promiſeth, that he would heal their backſlidings out of his free love, ver. 4. and do it by the communication of effectual grace, ver. 5.; ſo he injoins them all theſe duties in order thereunto.

(2.) That unleſs we find theſe things wrought in us in a way of preparation, for the receiving of the mercy deſired, we have no firm ground of expectation, that we ſhall be made partakers of it: for this is the method of God's dealing with the church. Then, and then only we may expect a gracious reviving from all our decays, when ſerious repentance working in the ways declared, is found in us. This grace will not ſurpriſe us in our ſloth, negligence, and ſecurity, but will make way for itſelf, by ſtirring us up unto ſincere endeavours after it, in the perſeverance of theſe duties. And until we ſee better evidences of this repentance among us than as yet appears, we can have but ſmall hopes of a general recovery from our preſent decays.

5. The work itſelf is declared, (1.) By its nature. (2.) In its cauſes. (3.) From its effects.

1. In the nature of it, it is the healing of backſlidings; *I will heal their backſlidings;* the ſin whereby they are fallen off from God, unto whom they are now exhorted to return. Theſe bring the ſouls of men into a diſeaſed eſtate, and danger of death: the cure hereof, is the work of God alone. Hence he gives himſelf that title, *I am the Lord that healeth thee*, Exod. xv. 26. And becauſe of the poiſonous nature of ſin, and the

danger it brings of eternal death unto the ſouls of men, the removal of it, or a recovery from it, is often called by the name of *healing*, Pſal. vi. 2. Iſa. lvii. 18, 19. Hoſ. vi. 1. Here it includeth two things; firſt, the pardon of ſin paſt, and then a ſupply of grace to make us fruitful in obedience; *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael*, as we ſhall ſee. This is God's healing of backſlidings.

2. In the cauſes of it, which are, (1.) The principal moving cauſe, and that is free undeſerved love; *I will love them freely.* From hence alone is our recovery to be expected. (2.) The efficient cauſe, which as unto ſins paſt is pardoning mercy; *Mine anger is turned away from him:* and as unto renewed obedience, in which two our recovery conſiſts, it is in a plentiful ſupply of effectual grace; *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael.* Freſh ſupplies of the Spirit of grace from above are ſo expreſſed; this is neceſſary unto our healing and recovery.

3. It is deſcribed by its effect, which is a much more abundant fruitfulneſs in holineſs and obedience, in peace and love, than ever they had before attained. This the prophet ſets out in multiplied ſimilitudes and metaphors, to denote the greatneſs and efficacy of the grace ſo communicated. I have a little inſiſted on the opening of this context, for ſundry reaſons.

1. The caſe which I would conſider, is in all the parts of it ſtated diſtinctly, and repreſented clearly unto us. There is nothing remains, but only the eſpecial way, whereby in the exerciſe of faith this grace may be obtained, which is that which I ſhall ſpeak unto in the laſt place, as that which is principally intended in this diſcourſe.

2. That I might ſhew how great a thing it is to have our ſpiritual decays made up, our backſlidings healed, and ſo to attain the vigorous acting of grace and ſpiritual life, with a flouriſhing profeſſion, and fruitful obedience in old age. It is ſo ſet forth here by the Holy Ghoſt, as that every one muſt needs have a ſenſe of the beauty and glory of the work: it is that which divine love, mercy, and grace are eminently effectual in unto the glory of God, that which ſo many duties are required to prepare us for. Let no man think that it is a light or common work, every thing in it is peculiar: it is unto them who are made partakers of it, a life from the dead.

3. That none may utterly deſpond under their decays. When perſons are awakened by new convictions, and begin to feel the weight of them, and how implicitly they are entangled with them, they are ready to faint, and even to deſpair of deliverance. But we ſee, that here is a promiſe of deliverance from them by pardoning mercy, and alſo of ſuch freſh ſprings of

grace as ſhall cauſe us to abound in holineſs and fruitfulneſs. Who is it that is entangled with corruptions and temptations, that groans under a ſenſe of a cold lifeleſs barren frame of heart? he may take in ſpiritual refreſhment, if by faith he can make application of this promiſe unto himſelf.

4. That which remains, is to declare the particular way whereby in the exerciſe of faith, we may obtain the fruit of this and all other promiſes of the like nature, unto the end ſo often propoſed; namely, of being flouriſhing and fruitful even in old age. Now, ſuppoſing a due attendance unto the duties mentioned, I ſhall give ſome directions with reſpect unto that which gives life, power, and efficacy unto them all, and which will infallibly bring us unto the full enjoyment of this ſignal mercy: and they are theſe that follow.

1. All our ſupplies of grace are from Jeſus Chriſt. Grace is declared in the promiſes of the Old Teſtament, but the way of its communication, and our receiving of it, is revealed unto us in the New. This belongs to the myſtery of it that all grace is from Chriſt, and ſhall be in vain expected any other way. He hath aſſured us, that *without him we can do nothing*; we can no more bring forth fruit than a branch can that is ſeparated from the vine, John xv. 3, 4, 5. He is our head, and all our ſpiritual influences, that is, divine communication of grace, are from him alone. He is our life efficiently, and liveth in us effectively, ſo is that our ability for vital acts is from him, Gal. ii. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt: Neverthelefs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the fleſh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and give himſelf for me.* Col. iii. 1, 2. Are we then any of us under convictions of ſpiritual decays? or do we long for ſuch renovations of ſpiritual ſtrength, as may make us flouriſh in faith, love, and holineſs? we muſt know aſſuredly, that nothing of all this can be attained, but it muſt come from Jeſus Chriſt alone. We ſee what promiſes are made, what duties are preſcribed unto us; but however we ſhould endeavour to apply ourſelves unto the one or the other, they would yield us no relief, unleſs we know how to receive it from Chriſt himſelf.

2. The only way of receiving ſupplies of ſpiritual ſtrength and grace from Jeſus Chriſt, on our part, is by faith. Hereby we come unto him, are implanted in him, abide with him ſo as to bring forth fruit. He dwells in our hearts by faith, and he acts in us by faith, and we live by faith in or on the Son of God. This I ſuppoſe will be granted, that if we receive any thing from Chriſt, it muſt be by faith, it muſt be in the exerciſe of it, or in a way of believing; nor is there any one word in the

ſcripture, that gives any encouragment to expect either grace or mercy from him in any other way, or by any other means.

3. This faith reſpects the perſon of Chriſt, his grace, his whole mediation, with all the effects of it, and his glory in them all. This is that which hath been ſo much inſiſted on in the foregoing diſcourſes as that it ought not to be again inſiſted on: this therefore is the iſſue of the whole. A ſteady view of the glory of Chriſt, in his perſon, grace and office, through faith, or a conſtant lively exerciſe of faith on him, according as he is revealed unto us in the ſcripture, is the only effectual way to obtain a revival from under our ſpiritual decays, and ſuch ſupplies of grace as ſhall make us flouriſhing and fruitful even in old age. He that thus lives by faith in him, ſhall by his ſpiritual thriving and growth, ſhew, *that the Lord is upright, that he is our Rock, and that there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.* We may conſider briefly, firſt, How this is teſtified unto in the ſcripture, and then what are the ways whereby this grace or duty will produce this effect, and ſo put a cloſe unto this part of the application of the ſacred truth before declared.

Firſt, This direction is given us, Pſal. xxxiv. 5. *They looked unto him, and were lightened, and their faces were not aſhamed.* That it is Chriſt, or the glory of God in him, that is thus looked unto, I need not prove; it will not be denied. And it is their faith which is expreſſed by their looking unto him; which is nothing but that beholding of his glory which we have deſcribed: for it is an act of truſt, ariſing from an apprehenſion of *who* and *what* he is. The iſſue or effect hereof is, that they were lightened; that is, received freſh communication of ſpiritual, ſaving, refreſhing light from him, and conſequently of all other graces, whence their faces were not aſhamed; nor ſhall we fail in our expectation of new ſpiritual communication, in the exerciſe of the ſame faith. This is that which we are called unto, Iſa. xlv. 22. *Look unto me, and be ſaved, all the ends of the earth.* On this look to Chriſt, on this view of his glory, depends our whole ſalvation; and therefore all things that are needful thereunto, do ſo alſo: this is the way whereby we receive grace and glory. This is the direction given us by the Holy Ghoſt for the attaining of them. So is the ſame duty deſcribed, Mic. vii. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my ſalvation; my God will hear me.* The church knew not any other way of relief, whatever her diſtreſſes were. A look unto Chriſt as crucified, (and how glorious he was therein, hath been declared), is made the cauſe and fountain of that godly ſorrow, which is a ſpring unto all other graces, eſpecially in thoſe who have fallen under decays,

Zech. xii. 10. *And I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and of ſupplications, and they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.* And it is ſo alſo of deſiring ſtrength from him, to enable us to endure all our trials, troubles and afflictions, with patience unto the end, Heb. xii. 2. *Looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith; (who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.* The only inquiry remaining, is, How a conſtant view of the glory of Chriſt, will produce this bleſſed effect in us? And it will do ſo ſeveral ways.

1. It will be affected by that transforming power and efficacy, which this exerciſe of faith is always accompanied withal. This is that which changeth us every day more and more into the likeneſs of Chriſt, as hath been at large before declared. Herein all revivals and all flouriſhings are contained. To have a good meaſure of conformity unto Chriſt, is all whereof in this life we are capable: the perfection of it is eternal bleſſedneſs. According as are our attainments therein, ſo is the thriving and flouriſhing of the life of grace in us, which is that which is aimed at. Other ways and means it may be have failed us, let us put this to the trial; let us live in the conſtant contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, and virtue will proceed from him to repair all our decays, to renew a right ſpirit within us, and to cauſe us to abound in all duties of obedience. This way of producing theſe effects, fleſh and blood will not reveal; it looks like waſhing in Jordan to cure a leproſy: but the life of faith is a myſtery known only unto them in whom it is.

2. It will fix the ſoul unto that object which is ſuited to give it delight, complacency, and ſatisfaction. This in perfection is bleſſedneſs, for it is cauſed by the eternal viſion of the glory of God in Chriſt: and the nearer approaches we make unto this ſtate, the better, the more ſpiritual, the more heavenly is the ſtate of our ſouls. And this is to be obtained only by a conſtant contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, as hath been declared. And it is ſeveral ways effectual unto the end now propoſed. For,

1ſt, The moſt of our ſpiritual decays and barrenneſs ariſe from an inordinate admiſſion of other things into our minds; for theſe are they that weaken grace in all its operations. But when the mind is filled with thoughts of Chriſt and his glory, when the ſoul thereon cleaves unto him with intenſe affections, they will caſt out, or not give admittance unto thoſe cauſes of

ſpiritual weakneſs and indiſpoſition, Col. iii. 1.—5. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God. When Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry.* Eph. v. 8. *For ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.*

2*dly*, Where we are engaged in this duty, it will ſtir up every grace unto its due exerciſe, which is that wherein the ſpiritual revival inquired after, doth conſiſt. This is all we deſire, all we long for, this will make us fat and flouriſhing, namely, that every grace of the Spirit have its due exerciſe in us, Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. *And not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe of the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us.* 2 Pet. i. 5.—8. *And beſides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge: and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity. For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Whereas, therefore, Chriſt himſelf is the firſt proper adequate object of all grace, and all its exerciſe, (for it firſt reſpects him, and then other things for him), when the mind is fixed on him, and his glory, every grace will be in a readineſs for its due exerciſe. And without this we ſhall never attain it by any reſolutions or endeavours of our own, let us make the trial when we pleaſe.

Laſtly, This will aſſuredly put us on a vigilant, watch and conſtant conflict againſt all the deceitful workings of ſin, againſt all the entrances of temptation, againſt all the ways and means of ſurpriſals into fooliſh frames, by vain imaginations, which are the cauſes of our decays. Our recovery or revival will not be effected, nor a freſh ſpring of grace be obtained, in a careleſs, ſlothful courſe of profeſſion. Conſtant watching, fighting, contending againſt ſin, with our utmoſt endeavour for an abſolute conqueſt over it, are required hereunto. And nothing will ſo much excite and encourage our ſouls hereunto, as a conſtant view of Chriſt and his glory; every thing in him hath a conſtraining power hereunto, as is known to all who have any acquaintance with theſe things.

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